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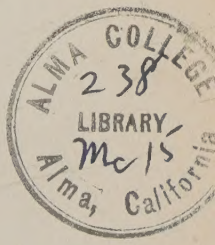
DOGMATIC SERIES

BY

RODERICK MacEACHEN
Priest of Columbus Diocese

God
Man
Revelation

VOLUME I



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BY

RODERICK MACEACHEN

TO

MY MOTHER

PREFACE

BY HIS EMINENCE

JAMES CARDINAL GIBBONS

You who read these lines love the truth. You and I may differ in belief; yet the truth was meant for both of us. It is a pleasure for me to look back over more than four score years and feel in my heart that men love the truth. All men are seeking for the truth. The mind yearns for truth as the body craves for food. Thank God, the world is filled with good and true men.

It is true, unbelief and irreligion exist in the world. Yet all men are devout and religious down in their hearts. The unbeliever who rejects the truth yearns for that same truth. He may not have had the opportunities

to learn it. His fury may be merely misguided zeal, like that of Saul, the persecutor. Men oppose what they do not understand.

All men want certainty of knowledge. They want defined truth. They want to know their destiny. God has provided this knowledge for all men in His divine Revelation. This divine Revelation comes to us through the ministry of God's holy Church. It comes to us in the form of dogmas or defined truths.

It is then with keen satisfaction that I introduce to you these little volumes. They are filled with the beauty of divine truth. They are called the Dogmatic Series. They portray all the dogmas of Faith in simplicity and clearness.

This work enters into every detail of dogma. Every page is filled with interest. It brings home to the people

in a most pleasing style the great treasures of Faith.

The Dogmatic Series is the first series of the Catholic Library. The whole work is to contain fifty volumes. The appearance of this great work will, undoubtedly, bring joy to multitudes of laymen. It is being written especially for them. It will be the fulfillment of a desire which many staunch Catholics have long felt. The work deals with the truths that are dear to us all. It depicts them in a new manner. It shows them forth in all their force and beauty.

You who are to be the readers of this work may well rejoice. I rejoice with you. It will respond to your fondest hopes. It will, with God's grace, help you to love more than ever the great truths of our holy Faith.

J. Card. Gibbons

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DOGMATIC SERIES.

Vol. I.

CHAPTER I.

Dogma.

THE intellect of man was made for truth. Man naturally craves for truth. He yearns for certainty of knowledge. Doubt and uncertainty are among the bitterest trials of man on earth. The intellectual beatitude of man consists in the possession of perfect truth. This he will find in God alone.

The truth that most concerns man is that which pertains to his eternal destiny. This truth he must learn from his God and Creator. God alone, Who made us, knows the reason why He made us. He alone can tell us the

destiny that awaits us. God has revealed this truth to us. He has founded His Church to teach it to us. When this truth comes to us through Divine Revelation and the ministry of the Church it is called dogma.

Dogma, then, is the defined truth that comes to us through the authority of God. It is the positive teaching of revealed religion. It is the sum total of all the truths which God teaches to man. Dogma is not opinion; it is not the teaching of human authority; it is not theory. It is positive truth.

There are but two kinds of religious beliefs possible. The one is based upon dogmas, the other is based upon human opinions.

He who knows the true meaning of dogma can never object to it. Dogma does not bind the mind; it frees it. It promotes the activity of the mind. It does not curtail the sphere of

human reason. It simply describes the boundaries that separate truth from error. A church without dogmas has no reason for its existence.

Christ said to the first ministers of His Church: "He that heareth you heareth Me; and he that despiseth you despiseth Me."[1] The authority of the Church does not enslave the human mind. It opens to it the realms of divine truth. It does not hinder progress in science. Even human knowledge is defined. It has its dogmas, as it were. Mathematics bids me believe that two and two are four. I am not free to believe that two and two are five. What would happen to the science of mathematics if everyone were free to apply his own whims to the solution of its problems? It would certainly become an absurdity. Much more truly can this be said of religion.

[1] St. Luke x, 16.

It is easy for thinking minds to see that they are not free to substitute falsehood for truth. As a creature of freewill, I may reject the truth. Yet I am not free so long as I do not possess the truth. Truth is something positive; truth is light. Error is negative; error is darkness. Truth is itself the liberty of the mind.

If I am lost in a forest, I am like a prisoner. I am held in a vast dungeon from which I am not able to free myself. This is the state of the mind that does not possess the truth in this life. It has lost its way in a maize of errors. It can but wander about in despair of finding the way that leads to its destiny. Truth, to such a mind, is a real liberator. It is like a great light that points out a clear road to the desired end. "The truth shall make you free."[2]

Enlightenment does not always free

[2] St. John viii, 32.

the mind. In the modern sense, enlightenment is often taken to mean information and experience. The man who is versed in literature and science and has gone about amongst men is said to be enlightened. Yet his mind is enslaved if he be a stranger to the truth revealed by God.

Human knowledge sometimes makes the mind proud. The mind must be humble and obedient to possess God's truth. For this reason Christ said we must become like little children. The child accepts all on the authority of its teacher. It must even learn to talk on the authority of others.

Thus the young mind is developed. If left free from all rules and teaching, it would be little different from a young barbarian. If left "free from the dogmas" of human learning, it would be enslaved in ignorance. Thus God wishes to teach us His truth. It

must be taught as it is. It must be defined by its own nature.

Truth is not originated in the minds of men; it is eternal. It comes from God. Truth is the agreement of all things with the idea of them that exists in the mind of God. If our idea of things differs from God's idea of them, we are in error. If our expression differs from the idea we have in our mind, we are guilty of falsehood.

Truth is in the very nature of things. I may think that a horse is a cow. Yet a horse is not a cow. I may say that the earth does not turn on its axis. Yet the truth is it does turn on its axis. I may deny that there is a God. The truth is, however, that there is a God.

The mind of man is fallible. Man is not a reliable source of truth. He may err and he may be guilty of falsehood. God is the true and infallible source of truth. When truth is transmitted to our minds by Divine Authority it is

called dogma. To reject dogma, then, is the same as to reject divine authority.

Men sometimes say that they profess faith in God but do not believe in dogmatic teaching. This is the same as to say to God: "I believe in Thee, O Lord, but I will not accept any defined truth from Thee." Such men call themselves freethinkers. They want religion based, not upon the reality of things, but upon their own individual judgment of things. They profess to accept divine truth but they want to make it a product of their own imagination. They are indeed free to think that the moon is handpainted. They are free to think that things are not what they really are. Yet their thoughts do not change realties.

Dogma is no invention either of men or angels. Dogma is truth that is eternally true. It has been said that the Catholic Church makes dogmas. Noth-

ing could be more absurd. The Church can no more make a dogma that she can create a world. The Church teaches the truths of God. She can not fail in this duty for her Master is with her. She can not teach any admixture of error. Error is impossible to the Church. She teaches with divine authority.

Man can possess no true religious faith except it be based upon dogma. "Faith cometh by hearing; and hearing by the word of Christ."[3] Dogma is the truth which God transmits to us through the teaching of His Church.

All dogma comes from God. The Church is the official teacher and interpreter of dogma. The truth of God comes to us through Divine Revelation. It is given to us in Holy Scripture and tradition. Holy Scripture is the written account of Divine Revelation. God the Holy Ghost is the author of

[3] Epistle to the Romans x, 17.

the Bible. Its every statement is divine truth. Its every truth is dogma. The sacred writers were but instruments in God's hands.

Divine Revelation contains a threefold order of truth. It contains truths which the unaided human reason can discover. Many of these are dictated by the law of nature and by reason. The existence of God is a truth of this kind.

Divine Revelation contains other truths which mere human reason could not discover with certainty. Such a truth is the infallibility of the Pope. Yet man can understand these truths when once they are made known by Divine Revelation.

Then there are truths which man could never have known. Neither can he comprehend them fully after they have been revealed to him. These truths are called mysteries. Chief amongst them are the Mystery of the Blessed

Trinity and the Mystery of the Incarnation.

Divine Revelation is the record of God's dealing with man. Since man remains a natural creature in all his relations with God, Revelation must contain some natural truths. These natural truths are indeed dogmas that must be accepted by all. Those who already know them by the light of reason are bound to accept them as though they knew them by Faith alone.

The truth may be contained in Divine Revelation either explicitly or implicitly. It is explicit when it is expressed clearly in so many words. It is implicit when it is implied in some other truth. Thus, the truth that the Blessed Virgin Mary is the Mother of God is implied in the truth that she is the Mother of Jesus. Here the implication is not only necessary but obvious.

The doctrine of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin is implied in the truth of her supernatural dignity as the Mother of Christ. Here the implication is necessary but not obvious. The implicit truth, as contained in Divine Revelation, can not always be discovered by human reason. Though the Church makes use of human intelligence, she is guided by the Holy Ghost in defining the doctrines of Faith.

There are in Holy Writ very few dogmas that are clear and explicit. There is hardly an important text that has not been interpreted in many different ways. Hence, we see the need of a living authority to define the teachings of the Bible. God has established the Catholic Church as the true guardian and interpreter of His Revelation. "The Church of the Living God (is) the pillar and ground of truth."[4]

When the Church defines a doctrine

[4] 1 Epistle to Timothy iii, 15.

of faith, she does not make a new dogma. She merely decides that the particular truth is contained in Divine Revelation. There can be no new dogma without new Revelation from God. A truth that is clearly expressed in Holy Writ needs no formal definition of the Church to make it a dogma. Yet a definition may become necessary, should the truth be denied. This does not, however, constitute a new teaching. It means that a definition has been given so that the truth may be readily distinguished from the opposing error. Though clearly contained in Holy Scripture, the doctrine of Christ's Divinity was not defined until it had been denied by Arius. Yet it had always been taught and believed.

Some writers speak of progress in dogma. If this progress means new definitions of doctrines taught from the beginning, it may be admitted.

If it means the discovery of new truths, it is false. This manner of advance can be found in human knowledge, but not in the divine truth of revealed religion. Christ and His Apostles delivered the whole body of Revelation to the Church. Since that time there has been no new revelation. Besides, the Church knew and understood the deposit of Divine Revelation in the days of the Apostles as well as she knows and understands it today.

There were many points that were not brought out clearly from the first. Many details were not fully explained. Some doctrines, now universally accepted, were controverted in former ages. "Those who err in belief," says St. Augustine, "do but serve to bring out more clearly the soundness of those who rightly believe. For there are many things that lay *hidden in the Scriptures*. When heretics were cut off they vexed the Church of

God with disputes; then the hidden *things were brought to light* and the will of God was made known."[5] This kind of progress in doctrine, we do admit. Yet the truth is not changed thereby. It does not imply new teachings nor new dogmas. As Albertus Magnus says: "It would be more correct to style this the progress of the believer in the Faith than the progress of the Faith in the believer."[6]

The development of dogma means that the Church is carrying on her divine mission of proclaiming the Gospel to the world. The Church received the deposit of Faith from her Divine Founder, Jesus Christ. To her He said: "Go into the whole world and preach the Gospel to every creature."[7] And again: "He that heareth you

[5] Com. on Fifty-Fourth Psalm, n. 22.

[6] Cardinal Gibbons, Faith of Our Fathers, p. 14, (Murphy 1895.)

[7] St. Mark xvi, 15.

heareth me."[8] Her teaching is the same today as it was on the first Pentecost. She teaches the same doctrine to the uncivilized tribes along the banks of the Ganges as she taught in the palaces of the Caesars two thousand years ago. She teaches the same dogmas to the unlettered men of all ages that she teaches to a Pasteur or a Newman. Neither centuries nor intellects change her dogmas. Men of diverse capacities may study her teachings with different degrees of knowledge. Conditions of the times may call for new pronouncements. Yet her teachings are unchanged and unchangeable. Bishops and priests preach the Gospel indeed. Yet they but teach in the name and authority of Holy Church. She sends them forth and she watches over them with motherly care and solicitude. The

[8] St. Luke x, 16.

Church herself is the true teacher of mankind.

St. Vincent of Lerins expresses it thus: "Let us take care that it be with us in matters of religion which affect our souls as it is with material bodies, which as time goes on, pass through successive phases of growth and development and multiply their years, yet remain always the same individual bodies as they were in the beginning. It very properly follows from the nature of things, that, with a perfect agreement and consistency between the beginnings and the final results, when we reap the harvest of dogmatic truth which has sprung from the seeds of doctrine sown in the springtime of the Church's existence, we should find no substantial difference between the grain which was first planted and that which we now gather. For though the germs of the early faith have in some respects been

evolved in the course of time, and still receive nourishment and culture, yet nothing in them that is substantial can suffer change. The Church of Christ is a faithful and ever-watchful guardian of the dogmas which have been committed to her charge. In this sacred deposit she changes nothing, she takes nothing from it, she adds nothing to it."[9]

[9] Cardinal Gibbons, Faith of Our Fathers, p. 14.

CHAPTER II

The Existence of God.

GOD is our Creator. He is the Supreme Being Who made heaven and earth and all things out of nothing. By the simplest wish of His divine will, He called forth all things from nothingness.

God is self-existing; He lives unbegotten, without beginning or end for all eternity. He is the First Cause of all things. Everything that exists owes its origin to Him. He is the one only omnipotent Being. He can do all things without the slightest weariness or effort.

God is a pure spirit infinitely perfect. He is all-wise, all-powerful, all-holy, all-just, all-merciful, all-good. God is not made up of parts; He is

not hampered with the imperfections of a body; He is wholly removed from all that is subject to corruption. "Yesterday and today and the same forever."[1]

It is ennobling to know that we trace our origin back to the Most High God. It brings peace and security to know that the all-wise God rules over us. It brings joy and hope and consolation to know that the all-good God loves us and accepts our love.

Our hearts crave for love, for a love that is boundless and never-ending. The noblest and purest of creatures can not satisfy the desires of our hearts. Back of all earth's love lie change and dissolution. It is in God and in the hope of His eternal love alone that our hearts rest happy and contented. Through all the trials and struggles of life the love of God alone brings us joy and comfort. Life

[1] Epistle to the Hebrews xiii, 8.

to the man without God is a dark enigma. His very being rebels against the thought of moving along in this great universe without the guidance and care of a Heavenly Father. His heart is not content to love and be loved merely by the passing creatures around him.

To be without God in the midst of ever-active nature is to be like a lone band of helpless children adrift in midocean upon a great modern steamer. The vessel plows on through the waves. There is no crew to guide it. The mighty engines are mysteriously working. The little ones, weeping, crouch in fear. In terror, they gaze at the wondrous machinery. In desolation and despair they abandon themselves to the unknown fate that awaits them.

"God is here on earth the most popular of beings," says Lacordaire. "In the midst of the fields, leaning

upon the implement of his labor, the cultivator of the soil lifts his eyes to heaven and he names God to his children by a motion as simple as his soul. The poor call upon Him, the dying invoke Him, the wicked fear Him, the just man blesses Him, kings surrender to Him their crown, armies place Him at the head of their battalions, victory gives Him thanks, defeat asks Him for help, the people arm themselves through Him against their tyrants; there is no time, nor place, nor occasion, nor feeling where God does not appear and where He is not named. What is there in this word? 'Shall I solemnly assert it upon oath?' Nothing but a name, it is true, but that is the name of God. It is the name that all nations have adored, in whose honor temples were built, priesthoods consecrated, prayers addressed. It is the greatest, the holiest, the most efficacious, the most

popular name that the lips of man have received the grace to pronounce."[2]

Belief in God is natural to man; atheism is unnatural. Every fibre within us seems to cry out and point to a Supreme Being Who rules our destinies. Some individuals in every age have attempted to deny the existence of God. Others would identify Him with nature so as to make Him a mere machine without intelligence or freewill. Yet, no one has ever been able to rest content in the persuasion that there is no God.

No nation or tribe has ever been found that did not show some form of worship to God. Men have worshiped a stock or a stone. They have paid religious homage to dumb brutes. They have adored the sun and the moon. Yet always it has been an expression of the instinctive reverence

[2] Lacordaire.

which they feel for a Supreme Being. The very nature of man seems to cry out for the help and Protection of an all-loving Creator. Left alone in the darkness of his intellect, man gropes about to find the Omnipotent Ruler of the universe.

The pagans of old worshiped false gods indeed. Yet their many gods merely represented the attributes of the one true God Whom they knew not. Amongst their gods there was always a supreme ruler. Then there was a god of the sea. There were gods of the waves, gods of the elements, gods of vengeance, gods of the harvest and of fruits. All this simply serves to show that reason revealed to them the existence of God. Yet reason was not capable of showing them the true nature of God.

Buddhism, Confucianism and Shintoism are the most popular forms of religion in China and Japan. Their

votaries number nearly five hundred millions. In the midst of their superstitions they recognize the Divinity. Brahminism is the state religion of Hindostan. It has about one hundred and twenty millions of followers. They also adore a Supreme Being. So it is with all the religions of pagan lands. They always show some vague knowledge of the One True God.[3]

Open profession of Atheism is rare amongst pagans. Perhaps their untutored minds are not so much exposed to the intellectual pride that produces atheists. Or, mayhap, in their forlorn condition they recognize more easily the promptings of their yearning hearts. It would seem that atheists abound most amongst peoples that enjoy the blessings of Christian civilization. Even so prodigals are oftenest found in the homes of wealth and luxury.

[3] Cardinal Gibbons, Our Christian Heritage, p. 28-31.

CHAPTER III.

The Order and Design of the Universe Prove the Existence of God.[1]

THERE are but two ways by which things can happen. Things happen either by chance or by design. If I am walking under an appletree and an apple falls upon my head, I am struck by chance. If a naughty boy aimed the apple at my head and struck me, I am struck by design.

The world is a wondrous mechanism. It is a marvelous combination of material activities. The earth produces all kinds of fruits and plants in season. Great forests spring up on its hills and plains. Oil and gas are brought from its inner recesses. Vast oceans beat ceaselessly upon their shores. The globe itself revolves upon

[1] See Cardinal Gibbons, Our Christian Heritage.

its axis, with wondrous precision, every twenty-four hours. Then it travels, with the same accuracy, in its fixed orbit, its yearly course around the sun.

The vast dome of the heavens is filled with millions of ever-moving bodies. Our sun is thirty-three hundred times greater that the earth. Nay, more: there is a countless number of suns such as this in the skies. All these heavenly bodies are filled with wonders that can never be fully explored by mortal man. Each travels in its orbit millions and billions of miles, always on schedule time, never one minute late in a century.

This universe with all its wonders is the result either of chance or of design. If it came into existence by chance, it was then a mere accident that all these wonders of the heavens and the earth came into being. There is a theory that has been held at diverse

times which maintains that the world was formed by the chance collision of molecules. No one has ever attempted to explain how these molecules were first set in motion. Nor have the same materialists been able to account for the force that set the heavenly bodies in motion. Anything that moves must either be able to move itself or it must be moved by something else. Then, anything that is moved must have been set it motion at some time. We are sure that the earth can not move itself. It is made up of dead matter.

Reason insists that the world was made by design. It was created by an Intelligent Being. This Being is God. The order in the world points to an Omnipotent Creator. The world in its wondrous harmony is ruled by an all-wise God.

Men may deny the existence of God. Yet they can not deny that the

world is a work worthy of an Omnipotent Creator. They can not deny that the world might well be the result of an infinitely Intelligent Cause. Nor can they give a reasonable account of the world's origin without pointing to the Omnipotent God.

Suppose some heroic discoverer should reach the South Pole and come back. It is presumed that no mortal man has ever returned from that point of the earth's surface. Our discoverer tells us that he has found there, at the very pole, a great electric power plant. It is fitted out with the latest model engines and dynamos. Thousands of glowing electric lights are hung in clusters for miles around. Tracks are laid in immense circuits. Trolley cars rush about on all sides with great speed. All the time the engines and dynamos are working smoothly. Yet there is no engineer to regulate and oil the machinery.

There are no motormen on the cars. In fact, no human being has ever set foot in that region.

Sad indeed would be the fate of the discoverer who related such a tale. He would be doomed to spend the rest of his days in a madhouse. He protests that the electric plant is no more wonderful than the stars and planets. Yet he is shut up in a padded cell because he declared that an electric plant came into existence by chance and was running beautifully without the aid of an intelligent hand.

Alas, perhaps the keeper of that poor madman is one of those who hold that there is no God. It may be that he is one of those who believe that this marvelous universe came into existence by chance. He may be one of those who believe that the world is running smoothly on adown the countless centuries without the guidance of an Intelligent Ruler.

CHAPTER IV.

The Moral Law Proves the Existence of God.

ALL men admit that there is a moral law. There is something that makes one thing good and another bad. This can only be a law. It is sometimes called the moral sense.

Men differ widely as to the nature of the moral law. An action that may be called moral by one may be considered immoral by another. Thus it is with divorce. A non-Catholic may consider marriage with a divorced person in keeping with morality. On the other hand, a Catholic holds it immoral. Some give wider scope to the moral law than others. Thus, a Catholic believes it possible to sin in thought. Again there are others who do not recognize sins of thought

Yet no matter how different men's ideas of the moral law may be, no one denies the difference between morality and immorality. No one maintains that it is as good to murder a helpless child as to give a loaf to a starving family. No one would hold that it were as good to steal from a poor, blind man as to drop a coin in his almsbox.

But if there is a moral difference between act and act, there must be a norm to define this difference. This norm exists in men's hearts. Nor was it written there by man. Nor was it made by the wise rulers of earth. It has existed there since the dawn of man's existence. It makes its presence felt even to those who have never known human laws. Human laws change. Different nations have different codes. New ages bring new ideas of civil law. Yet the moral law re-

Murder is murder today as it was on that far-off day when Cain steeped his hands in his brother's blood.

Men may ignore many promptings of the moral law written in their hearts. Yet it has never been completely obliterated, even amongst the fiercest savages.

There have been found men to deny almost every known truth. Some have doubted their own existence. Others have denied the reality of the world. Men have denied many mandates of the moral law. Yet no one has ever been found to deny the abstract ideas of justice and injustice, honesty and dishonesty, honor and disgrace, right and wrong, purity and impurity, charity and cruelty. These ideas exist amongst all men. These ideas spring from the moral law that exists in the human heart.

But there can be no moral law without God. The moral law can

come from God alone. If man had formed the moral law, he could change its principles at will. Yet no human legislation could ever make right out of wrong. If all the legislatures of earth should decree that it were lawful to kill babies that disturbed your nightly slumbers, the deed would still be a heinous crime. The death of each innocent babe would cry out for vengeance to the heart of each and every subject of that law.

Euthanasia, or the murder of incurables, has often been proposed. Yet it has always been rejected. Its promoters have been told it is opposed to humanity. It is an uncanny idea. It is shocking; it is cruel; it is wrong. And yet, if men are the makers of their own moral law, why do they not change the law so as to permit these suffering incurables to be quietly murdered? It would be putting them out of their misery as is done with a worn-out

horse. It would relieve society of a heavy and thankless burden. For the burden is thankless in this world, indeed, when there is question of an incurable pauper. Yet there is something forbidding in the heart. Were every legislature of the world to pass a law recognizing euthanasia, it would still be a criminal act of cowardly murder. The official murder would still haunt the mind of humanity. It is the moral law which God has written in men's hearts that would declare it a crime.

Right and wrong are ideas that come from the Divine Intellect. There are things that are intrinsically right and things that are intrinsically wrong. They are so by nature. God Himself could not change them. For they are by nature immutable. It were absurd to think of changing right into wrong. It were like changing light into darkness. Even the Omnipotent God could

not make blasphemy a virtue, nor perjury an honest act.

Our whole life is unreasonable if God has not given us a moral law. Men are impelled by a mysterious force. They are restrained by a force that does not come from their own nature. This is the moral law. It is an eternal and unchangeable law that comes from God.[1]

[1] See Cardinal Gibbons, Our Christian Heritage.

CHAPTER V.

Conscience Proves the Existence of God.[1]

THERE is something within us that we call conscience. It is as if a voice were speaking within us. When we have done wrong a strange feeling of shame and remorse comes over us. When we perform good and noble deeds we feel a certain inner satisfaction.

The voice of conscience is never silent. When men commit crimes, they often try to still the voice of conscience by riotous living, by amusements, by pleasures and excesses. Yet the voice of conscience is ever present with them. If they flee to the farthest quarters of the globe it follows them. It haunts them by day and by night.

[1] See Cardinal Gibbons, Our Christian Heritage.

Their crime may be a secret to the whole world. Yet there is no hidden recess of earth where they are not accused of their crime. Multitudes may love and honor them. Yet they are always harassed by the never-ceasing voice of conscience.

Who will say that this mysterious voice was placed there by man? True, it can be made more tender by religious training. Yet its accusations point to something that goes beyond all human law and penalty. It reminds us of something more than our responsibility to human law. It is not the mere fear of detection by man that troubles the mind of the secret criminal. His inner anguish would be just as bitter were he exiled on a desert island.

If the voice of conscience were the mere sentiment of human ethics, it could only remind us of our responsibility to man and society. If it were

merely the result of training, then it could warn us of nothing further than the aims of that teaching. But the voice of conscience is not silenced when the price of human justice has been paid. The murderer who has escaped the electric chair through the skill of his lawyers is pursued just as relentlessly as the murderer who fears detection by the law.

Conscience tells us that we must answer to an all-just God for our deeds. Though we answer to the whole world for our sins, conscience still upbraids us. It will not give us rest until we have made our peace with God. Nor can we make our peace with God until we have made our peace with our fellow-man. There is on earth but one means of stilling the chiding voice of conscience. It is by true repentance as enjoined by the law of Christ. Well our Saviour knew the need of peace for sinful hearts. It was for this that he

instituted the Sacrament of Penance. Who has not thanked God in his heart for this great Sacrament of Mercy! Who can describe the peace of the sinner's heart after he has made a sincere confession and received Sacramental absolution!

Conscience is a special proof of God's love and mercy towards us. It makes us feel that He is ever looking into our hearts. It tells us that He will punish the evil we do and reward the good we perform. God has placed great and good men over us to guide us in His law. Yet the voice of conscience within us is surer and wiser than all these. It is, as it were, the finger of God pointing out the way to us.

If we do evil far removed from the eyes of men, there comes, nevertheless, a feeling upon us as though someone were looking at us, pointing the finger of shame at us. And if unknown to

all the world, we do a good and noble deed we feel as though a kind father or a tender mother were smiling benignly upon us. This is the prompting to good and the repugnance to evil that God has placed in our hearts. This is the tender solicitude that God shows for us every hour of our lives. We are His own. We are His creatures, His children. Such is the care we received from a devoted mother in our childhood. She warned us against evil; she chided us when we did wrong. She praised us when we were good; she embraced us when we responded to her loving commands.

All men recognize conscience. It has led some to maintain that virtue is its own reward and vice its own punishment. True it is that to practice virtue brings peace of heart, whilst to indulge the passions and sink into vice brings disgust and remorse. Yet this were indeed a poor motive for

the observance of the moral law. The reward and punishment due to the moral law must come from God. Human nature could not reward or punish itself. To practice virtue, we must often deny human nature its very cravings. Whilst to sink in vice is but to follow the desires of nature for sensual pleasure.

Clearly conscience tells us that there is a God of love above us. Conscience gives us a proof of God's bounty that no man can deny. It fills our very heart with the knowledge of God's goodness. It is an inborn light, a constant friend that dwells in our heart our whole life through and points every day to God and Eternity.

CHAPTER VI.

The Blessed Trinity.

THE mystery of the Blessed Trinity is a fundamental truth of Christianity. It has been revealed to us that there are three distinct persons in God. This is a dogma of divine Faith. It has been clearly taught from the days of Christ Himself.

Like many other mysteries of Faith, the doctrine of the Blessed Trinity is beyond the comprehension of the human reason. It is a truth that could never have entered into the mind of man had it not been revealed by God. Though we can not fully understand the mystery of the Blessed Trinity, we are absolutely certain that it is not opposed to reason. God who revealed this mystery also gave us reason.

It has been said that the doctrine of the Blessed Trinity is a contradiction. For it teaches that three are one. It would, indeed, be a contradiction to say that three Gods are one God or that three persons are one person. Yet it is no contradiction to say that three persons are one God. It is not a contradiction to say that three distinct persons have one and the same divine nature. Though we can not fully understand how three persons can be one and the same God, we know that this truth is not opposed to any principle of right reason.

It is enough for us to know that God has revealed the mystery of the Blessed Trinity to man. God understands His own nature. It is not for us to question how it can be. Theology, indeed, explains the doctrine of the Trinity according to the teachings of philosophy. It shows clearly that this doctrine is in accordance with the principles

of right reason. However, reason can not fully investigate this sublime mystery. We naturally judge others by ourselves. We are prone to measure the divine nature by our knowledge of human nature. This faulty manner of reasoning has led many into error. Whenever men have set up their own limited reason as a criterion of supernatural truth, they have lost their Faith.

The Divine Nature is indivisible in Its essence, consciousness, knowledge, power and attributes. It is Godhead Itself. If we attempt to compare the three Divine Persons with human persons, we simply confuse the mind. God is not measured by human standards. There is nothing to which Divinity can be likened. The three Divine Persons are equal in all things. All three are co-eternal. God the Father is unbegotten from all eternity. God the Son is begotten of the Father from

all eternity. God the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father and the Son from all eternity.

The Son is not a mere external manifestation of God. The Son is true God, the second person of the Blessed Trinity, who became man. Nor is the Holy Ghost a mere manifestation of God in the hearts of men. The Holy Ghost is true God, the third person of the Blessed Trinity. The doctrine of the Blessed Trinity is but obscurely taught in the Old Testament. The fullness of Divine Revelation had not yet been given to man. It was left for Christ to reveal this fundamental truth in all clearness. It is expressed many times in the New Testament.

Christ commanded the Apostles to baptize "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."[1] God the Son is called the Word. "In the beginning was the

[1] 1 St. Matthew, xxviii, 19.

Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."[2] From this it is clear that the Word, God the Son, is co-eternal with God the Father. "In the beginning the Word was with God," means that God the Son is by nature inseparably united with God the Father. He is one God with Him. "The Word was God" proclaims the Divinity of the Son. The Apostle Thomas cries out to Christ: "My Lord and my God."[3] St. Paul again and again attests Christ's Divinity: "But to the Son (said God) Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever."[4]

Christ proclaims His equality with the Father; "As the Father raiseth up the dead, and giveth life, so the Son also giveth life to whom He will. . . . That all men may honor the Son as they honor the Father. He who

[2] St. John i, 1.
[3] St. John xx, 28.
[4] Epistle to the Hebrews i, 8.

honoreth not the Son honoreth not the Father Who hath sent him."[5]

Of the Holy Ghost, he says: "God hath sent the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying: Abba, Father."*

There are no degrees of perfection in the Divine Persons. All three Divine Persons possess the divine nature in all its perfection. In one place Christ says: "I and the Father are one."[6] Here He is speaking as God. On another occasion He says: "The Father is greater than I."[7] Here He speaks as man. As St. Augustine says: "Such texts show that the Son is the lesser because of the form of servant; that is, because of the human nature which He assumed."[8]

Christ said to the Apostles: "Going therefore, teach ye all nations, baptiz-

* Epistle to the Galatians iv, 6.

[5] St. John v, 21-23.

[6] St. John x, 30.

[7] St. John xiv, 28.

[8] De S. Trinitate II, c. 1, n. 3.

ing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."[9] Here Christ clearly expresses the Unity and the Trinity of God.

"I will ask the Father," says Christ, "and He will give you another Comforter . . . when the Paraclete, the Holy Ghost is come whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things."[10] Here Christ clearly distinguishes Himself from God the Father and refers to the Holy Ghost as a distinct person whom the Father will send. When John was baptizing Christ, "He saw the spirit of God descending as a dove and coming upon Him, and behold a voice from Heaven saying: This is My Beloved Son in whom I am well pleased."[11] On Pentecost the Holy Ghost came

[9] St. Matthew xxviii, 19.
[10] St. John xiv, 16-26.
[11] St. Matthew iii, 16, 17.

upon the Apostles in the form of fiery tongues.[12]

From beginning to end of the New Testament there is frequent mention of the three Divine Persons. They are always referred to as God.

It is enough for us to know that the Church, with her divine authority, has ever taught the doctrine of the Blessed Trinity. "All those who before me have written about the Trinity which is God," says St. Augustine, "whom I have been able to read, have taught the same doctrine. They all teach according to the Scripture of both the Old and the New Testaments that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, by an inseparable equality of one and the same substance imply a Divine Unity. Thus there are not three gods. There is but one God. The Father begot the Son, therefore the Son is distinct from

[12] Acts of the Apostles ii, 2-4.

the Father. The Holy Ghost is not the Father nor the Son. The Holy Ghost is the Spirit of the Father and of the Son, coequal with the Father and the Son and pertaining to the Unity of the Trinity."[13]

The Apostle's Creed, which comes down from Apostolic times, professes the doctrine of the Blessed Trinity: "I believe in God, the Father Almighty . . . and in Jesus Christ, His only Son our Lord . . . I believe in the Holy Ghost."

The Nicene Creed formulated at the Council of Nice, A. D. 325, defining the doctrine of the Blessed Trinity, says: "I believe in one God, the Father Almighty . . . and in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, born of the Father before all ages; God of God, Light of Light, begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father . . . and in the

[13] De Trin. 4, l. 1, ch. 4.

Holy Ghost, the Lord and Giver of Life, Who proceedeth from the Father and the Son; Who together with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified."

The Athanasian Creed, which comes down from the fourth century, expresses the doctrine of the Blessed Trinity fully:

"Whosoever will be saved, before all things it is necessary that he hold the Catholic Faith;

"Which Faith, except everyone do keep entire and inviolate, without doubt he shall perish everlastingly.

"Now the Catholic Faith is this: that we worship one God in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity,

"Neither confounding the Persons, nor dividing the substance;

"For there is one Person of the Father, another of the Son, another of the Holy Ghost;

"But the Godhead of the Father

and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost is all one; the glory equal, the majesty co-eternal.

"Such as the Father is, such is the Son, and such is the Holy Ghost;

"The Father uncreate, the Son uncreate, the Holy Ghost uncreate;

"The Father infinite, the Son infinite, and the Holy Ghost infinite.

"The Father eternal, the Son eternal, the Holy Ghost eternal;

"And yet they are not three eternals, but one eternal:

"And also they are not three uncreates, nor three infinites; but one uncreate and one infinite.

"In like manner, the Father is almighty, the Son almighty, and the Holy Ghost almighty;

"And yet they are not three almighties, but one Almighty.

"So, the Father is God, the Son God, and the Holy Ghost is God;

"And yet they are not three Gods, but one God.

"So, likewise, the Father is Lord, the Son is Lord, and the Holy Ghost is Lord;

"And yet they are not three Lords, but one Lord.

"For like as we are compelled by the Christian verity to acknowledge each Person by himself to be God and Lord:

"So we are forbidden by the Catholic religion to say there are three Gods or three Lords.

"The Father is made of none, neither created nor begotten;

"The Son is from the Father alone, not made, nor created, but begotten;

"The Holy Ghost is from the Father and the Son, not made, nor created, nor begotten, but proceeding:

"So there is one Father, not three

Fathers; one Son, not three Sons; one Holy Ghost, not three Holy Ghosts,

"And in this Trinity there is nothing before or after, nothing greater or less; but the whole three Persons are co-eternal together, and co-equal:

"So that in all things, as is aforesaid, the Unity is to be worshiped in Trinity, and the Trinity in Unity.

"He, therefore, that will be saved, must thus think of the Trinity.

"Furthermore, it is necessary to everlasting salvation that he also believe rightly the Incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ.

"Now the right faith is that we believe and confess that our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is both God and man.

"He is God of the substance of His Father, begotten before the world; and He is man of the substance of His Mother, born in the world.

"Perfect God and perfect man; of

reasonable soul and human flesh subsisting;

"Equal to the Father according to His Godhead; and less than the Father according to His manhood,

"Who, although He be both God and man, yet He is not two, but one Christ;

"One, not by the conversion of the Godhead into flesh, but by the taking of the manhood unto God;

"One altogether, not by confusion of substance, but by unity of person.

"For as the reasonable soul and the flesh is one man, so God and man is one Christ,

"Who suffered for our salvation, descended into hell, rose again the third day from the dead.

"He ascended into Heaven; He sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from whence He shall come to judge the living and the dead:

"At Whose coming all men shall rise again with their bodies, and shall give an account of their own works,

"And they that have done good shall go into life everlasting; and they that have done evil, into everlasting fire.

"This is the Catholic Faith, which except a man believe faithfully and steadfastly, he can not be saved.

"Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost.

"As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end, Amen."

"Accordingly it is impossible to worship one of the Divine Persons," says Cardinal Newman, "without worshiping the others also. In praying to the Father, we only arrive at His mysterious presence through His Son and Spirit; and in praying to the Son and Spirit, we are necessarily carried beyond them to the source

of Godhead from which They are derived. We see this in the very form of many of the received addresses to the Blessed Trinity; in which without reference to the mediatorial scheme, the Son and Spirit seem, even in the view of the Divine Unity, to take a place in our thoughts between the Father and His creatures; as in the ordinary doxologies 'to the Father through the Son and by the Spirit,' or 'to the Father and Son in the unity of the Holy Ghost.' "[14]

[14] The Arians of the Fourth Century, p. 177. (Longmans, Green & Co., 1901.)

CHAPTER VII.

The Creation of the World.

EVERYTHING that exists was created by God. "The Lord made Heaven and earth and the sea and all things that are in them."[1] God made all things out of nothing. In the book of Wisdom it is said: "Thy Almighty hand which made the world of matter without form."[2] This might simply mean that God first created the matter, then gave it a form. St. Paul says: "By faith we understand that the world was framed by the word of God: that from invisible things visible things might be made."[3] By this the Apostle simply means to say that the world was made from nothing. St.

[1] Exodus xx, 11.
[2] Wisdom ii, 18.
[3] Epistle to the Hebrews xi, 3.

Thomas says: "Invisible things may be taken to mean the archetypal ideas that exist in the mind of God."[4]

God alone can create. No other being could create even the smallest atom. There have been men who held that some substances were created by angels. The Manicheans taught that there was a principle of evil who was the creator of all things evil. The words of the Prophet speak for God: "I am the Lord, that make all things, that alone stretch out the heavens, that establish the earth, and there is none with me."[5]

Creation is not the work of one Divine Person. It is the work of the Triune God. The creative act is common to all three persons of the Blessed Trinity. The Lateran Council, c. 14, says: "The Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost, consubstantial and

[4] Summa i, q. 65, a. 4.
[5] Isaias xliv, 24.

co-equal and co-omnipotent and co-eternal are one principle of all things; the Creator of all things visible and invisible." The three Divine Persons act together in the work of creation. They are one Creator as they are one God.

Creation was a free act of God. He was free to create or not to create at will. "Our God . . . hath done all things whatsoever he would."[6] Creation is primarily an expression of God's bounty. The world perfectly manifests the idea God wished to express. It possesses all the perfection God wished to give. Hence, it is out of place to ask whether creation could be more perfect. God created all corporeal and spiritual beings. He established the most beautiful harmony amongst them. All things are fitted for their proper destiny. They are suited to the end for which God

[6] Psalms cxiii, B-3.

made them. God created the world, first, for His Own glory, then, for the good of His creatures. This is the greatest object things could have for their existence. Hence, the world may be said to be the best possible.

God created the world not from eternity but in time. This is clear from the words of Christ: "Glorify thou me, O Father, with thyself, with the glory which I had before the world was, with thee."[7] The Book of Genesis describes the creation of the material world. God created the heavens and the earth in the beginning of time. It was then but a shapeless mass. On the first day God divided light from darkness. On the second day, He made the firmament and divided the waters that were under the firmament from those that were above the firmament. On the third day, He divided the seas from the land. On the fourth day, He made

[7] St. John xvii, 5.

the luminaries of the heavens. The sun was created to shine by day and the moon and stars to shine by night. On the fifth day, God made the animals of the sea and the fowls of the air. On the sixth day, He made the animals that live upon the land and also created man. On the seventh day, He rested from His labors and blessed the day.[8] He then commanded man to consecrate this day to the Lord.[9] It was called the Sabbath.

It is clear from Scripture that God did not create all things at one time. However, the Church has never defined the meaning of the six days. Saint Augustine held that God created all things simultaneously. He held that the six days refer to the six different works as they appeared to the minds of the angels. Many others held that they were six natural days of twenty-

[8] Genesis ii, 3.
[9] Exodus xx, 8.

four hours each. The Church condemned others who asserted that the Biblical account of creation was mixed with myths and fables.

There is no longer doubt that a certain length of time elapsed between each successive act of creation. Yet the Church has not decided what length of time is designated by the word "day." The Hebrew word "iom" from which "day" is translated may also mean an indefinite period of time. The mention of evening and morning creates no difficulty. These are also noted for the first three days. But since the sun and moon had not yet been created, these could hardly have been natural days. Evening and morning may be taken to mean respectively the shapeless and the completed state of things.

The opinion, now almost universally held by Catholic theologians, is that the six days refer to geological periods.

It is impossible to determine the length of these periods. However, it seems certain that the earth developed into its present form through the operation of natural causes. Mountains were formed by contractions and eruptions. Valleys were leveled by floods. These changes of the earth's surface still continue today. Many remains of animals and plants have been found in the deep strata of the earth. No trace of man, however, is to be found there. This would indicate that animals and plants existed thousands of years before the creation of man. The sun, the stars, and the planets also may have been formed gradually in the course of long ages. Changes are still observed in the stars and planets.

God could, indeed, have created the world as it now exists. Yet it seems incredible that God should have given the appearance of volcanic eruptions to certain regions and that He should have

placed fossils and remnants of animals down deep in the earth. This would be like making sport of human intelligence. For it is, indeed, within the sphere of man to study nature.

CHAPTER VIII.

The Omnipresence of God.

GOD is everywhere. God is immense and omnipresent. Immensity is an attribute of God. It means that He is subject to no bounds or limits. Omnipresence, however, is merely a relation of God to His creation. If there were no creation there could be no presence of God. There would be nothing to which He could be present.

When we mention the diverse ways in which God is present, we refer to His different manifestations of Himself to His creatures. In Heaven, God manifests Himself in all His glory. The Divine Presence in the Holy Eucharist is a manifestation under a sacramental form. In Bethlehem, God

the Son was present under the form of the Christ-Child. God the Holy Ghost manifested himself under the form of a dove at the river Jordan. God is present in a special manner amongst those who assemble to worship Him. "Where there are two or three gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them."[1] This, because there is a special relation between Him and that gathering. He is said to be present in churches and oratories, even though the Blessed Sacrament is not kept there, because those places bear a special relation to Him. "The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon him; to all that call upon him in truth."[2]

God is present everywhere by His power. He must be present wherever He acts. He preserves all things in existence. He rules the universe and

[1] St. Matthew xviii, 20.
[2] Psalms cxliv, 18.

all its creatures. He gives life and energy to every living thing. If God were to abandon the tiniest portion of creation for one instant, it would wither away and pass into nothingness. "O Lord . . . all things are in Thy power . . . Thou hast made Heaven and earth and all things that are under the cope of Heaven. Thou art Lord of all and there is none that can resist Thy majesty."[3]

God is present everywhere by His infinite intelligence. He sees all things. God's knowledge is infinite. Nothing can be unknown to Him. Both the past and the future are ever present to Him. "For the Lord knoweth all knowledge, and hath beheld the signs of the world; he declareth the things that are past, and the things that are to come, and revealeth the traces of hidden things."[4] Each atom of creation

[3] Esther xiii, 9-11.

[4] Ecclesiasticus xlii, 19.

is as well known to Him as the whole universe. "He telleth the number of the stars and calleth them all by name."[5] God knows all the movements of His creatures. He knows every tiny insect. Not even a single microbe can exist without God's knowledge.

God knows the secrets of our hearts. He knows every thought that passes through our mind. He knows our motives and our intentions. "The eyes of the Lord are brighter than the sun, beholding round about all the ways of men, and the bottom of the deep, and looking into the hearts of men, into the most hidden parts."[6] "The works of all flesh are before him, and there is nothing hid from his eyes. He seeth from eternity to eternity."[7]

[5] Psalms cxlvi, 4.
[6] Ecclesiasticus xxiii, 28.
[7] Ecclesiasticus xxxix, 24-25.

God is everywhere present in love. God loves all His creatures. He showers His graces and blessings upon us. He dwells in our soul by grace and love. The Apostle says: "You are the temple of the living God; as God saith: I will dwell in them, and walk amongst them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people."[8] Those who love God and serve Him are united with Him in the tenderest bonds of love. St. John beautifully describes this mutual love: "And we have known, and have believed the charity which God hath to us. God is charity; and he that abideth in charity abideth in God, and God in him."[9] Those who are strong in Faith and virtue may be said to be inseparable from God. "For," says St. Paul, "I am sure that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor

[8] II Epistle to the Corinthians vi, 16.
[9] 1 St. John iv, 16.

powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor might, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God."[10]

[10] Epistle to the Romans viii, 38-39.

CHAPTER IX.

Divine Providence.*

GOD watches over all His creatures. He governs all beings by laws suited to their nature. He directs them to their respective destinies. God rules over His creatures with infinite wisdom. His Divine Providence extends from the smallest life cell to the highest angel, from the tiniest atom to the universe itself.

Nothing is too lowly for His loving care. If He deigns to create the creeping worm and the tiny insect, surely He will watch over their existence.

The bounty of God has been lavished upon all creation. God has provided for the needs and comforts of all His

* See Cardinal Gibbons, Our Christian Heritage.

living creatures. He has covered the lower animals with natural raiment suited to the different climates in which they live.

God has provided abundance of varied sustenance for man. He has given him materials from which to clothe himself. He has provided beasts of burden and domestic animals for his benefit. He has given him the power of water, steam, electricity and gas for his machines. He has provided him with fuel of various kinds. He has supplied him with abundant materials for his buildings. He has stored in the bowels of the earth treasures and minerals which man may dig at will.

God made the sun to shed its light upon the earth and to pour out its heat for the benefit of all living creatures. He sends down the dew and the rain to moisten the growing crops. "The eyes of all hope in thee, O Lord; and thou givest meat in due season.

Thou openest thy hand and fillest with blessing every living creature."[1]

God leads us through life. He provides for us as a most devoted father. Well might it be said to each one of us: "The Lord thy God hath carried thee, as a man is wont to carry his little son, all the way that you have come, until you came to this place."[2] God carries us, as it were, in His arms, through life into eternity.

In spite of God's tender care, there is much misery and suffering in the world. The trials and misfortunes of life are indeed hard to bear. We can not understand them in the light of Divine Providence unless we consider our present life in its true relation to eternity.

God indeed provides amply for our earthly wants. Yet His special care is directed toward our eternal wel-

[1] Psalms cxliv, 15-16.
[2] Deuteronomy i, 31.

fare. If God seems to abandon us, at times, it is to make us love Him the more. If God permits great sorrows to embitter our earthly life, it is to make us set our hearts more fervently on eternity.

God can not abandon us. He can not cease to love us. Man can abandon God and cease to love Him. But God's love is eternal. God is not fickle in His love. It is here that the Providence of God is most tender. God will not abandon even the wicked to his sins. He provides for the sinner as well as for the saint. He is our "Father in Heaven, who maketh His sun to rise upon the good and the bad, and raineth upon the just and the unjust."[3]

God shows special love even for sinners. He gives them the grace of repentance. He fills their hearts with remorse. He gives weak mortals the

[3] St. Matthew v, 45.

power to forgive them in the Sacrament of Penance.

The sinner rebels against God. Yet God longs to take him back to His bosom. "Oh, how good and sweet is Thy spirit, O Lord, in all things! And therefore Thou chastiseth them that err, by little and little; and admonishest them, and speakest to them, concerning the things wherein they offend: that leaving their wickedness they may believe in Thee, O Lord."[4]

God knows what is good for us better far than we ourselves know. If He does not grant our prayers, at times, it is not because He loves us less. A good mother must often refuse the wishes of her child. This is but a proof of her love and solicitude for her little one.

He who puts his trust in Divine Providence knows the meaning of the world about him. To him it reflects

[4] Wisdom xii, 1, 2.

the love and bounty of God. No trial or sorrow can drive peace from his heart. No misfortune can make him despair. For he knows that a loving God is watching over him. Well may he say with holy David: "I am a beggar and poor; the Lord is careful for me."[5]

God loves us and provides for us in a wondrous manner. Yet we are bound to use all our powers and faculties to work out our last end and destiny. God helps those that help themselves. God makes the crops grow in the fields. Yet man must sow, and cultivate and reap them. God provides remedies for our bodily ills. Yet certain men must become physicians to administer them to us. God wants us to be industrious and energetic. Yet He does not want us to worry. He wants us to labor as if all depended upon us and to trust in Him as if all depended on Him.

CHAPTER X.

Man—His Creation.

"AND God said: Let us make man to our image and likeness; and let him have dominion over the fishes of the sea, and the fowls of the air, and the beasts, and the whole earth, and every creeping creature that moveth upon the earth! And God created man to his own image: to the image of God he created him; male and female he created them."[1]

"And the Lord God formed man of the slime of the earth, and breathed into his face the breath of life, and man became a living soul."[2] "And the Lord said: It is not good for man to be alone: let us make him a help like unto himself. . . . Then the Lord

[1] Genesis i, 25-27.
[2] Genesis ii, 7.

God cast a deep sleep upon Adam: and when he was fast asleep, he took one of his ribs and filled up flesh for it. And the Lord built the rib which he took from Adam into a woman."[3] God formed Adam's body from the slime of the earth. At the same time endowed it with an immortal soul. By a direct act, God created man. He did not make man's body at one time and his soul at another. The nature of man is made up of both body and soul. So that to create man it was necessary to form the body and create soul at the same time.

God made Eve's body out of a rib from Adam's side. God also endowed Eve's body with an immortal soul at the very moment in which He formed it. "God created man to his own image . . . male and female he created them."[4]

[3] Genesis ii, 18-22.
[4] Genesis i, 27.

God could have formed Adam's body from the body of a brute and then endowed it with a human soul. This could not be in the course of nature or by natural process. There is nothing in Scripture to warrant this hypothesis. Evolutionists hold that man's body gradually developed from some lower animal form. Some even say that the human soul is merely an evolution of brute instinct.

Holy Scripture, however, declares: "And Adam called all the beasts . . . and all the fowls . . . and all the cattle . . . but for Adam there was not found a helper like himself."[5] Had Adam been an evolution of a brute, surely he would have found some animal "like himself." He would, undoubtedly, have found a close resemblance to himself in the last species from which he had evolved.

Then if God had allowed Adam to

[5] Genesis ii, 20.

evolve from a brute, surely he would have permitted Eve to grow out of some female brute. Yet God formed Eve from a rib which He took from Adam.

God created woman to be the helpmate of man and then said to them: "Increase and multiply."[6]

It is absurd to suppose that God created Adam sexless in the beginning or that He made him bi-sexual. For it is said: "God made THEM, male and female, and God blessed THEM."[7] The reference is always in the plural number.

[6] Genesis i, 28.
[7] Genesis i, 27-28.

CHAPTER XI.

Nature of Man.

MAN is composed of body and soul. The body is an animal organism. It is a material substance subject to the laws of growth and corruption. The human body receives its life from the soul. Whenever a human body is generated God creates a soul. At the very moment the body is generated the soul is united with it. It is then human life begins.

It is different with the brute. Both its body and its "animal soul" are generated simultaneously from the parent brute. The "animal soul" is nothing else than animal life. This animal life depends on the animal body for its existence. It perishes with the animal body.

The human body resembles the brute

body in all its functions. Yet the principle of life is different. Man is more than a mere animal organism. He possesses both a material and a spiritual nature. He is a rational creature. The nobler part of his being is an immortal soul. The human soul is a reality in itself. Though it is naturally united with the body, it can exist of itself. In the present state, the soul operates through the medium of the body. However, its activity is more perfect when it is separated from the body after death.

The soul is a spirit. Its chief faculties are intellect and freewill. Herein chiefly consists the likeness of man to God. "God created man to his own image."[1]

Man is the noblest creature of earth. He is the link between God and creation. How beautiful he was when he came from the hand of God! He was

[1] Genesis i, 27.

filled with grace of body and soul. His mind was aglow with the light of wisdom and knowledge. God himself often talked with him. Man conversed familiarly with his Creator. God, undoubtedly, revealed to him many mysteries of Heaven.

Man's abode was a paradise on earth. It was a place filled with delights and pleasure. It was a realm of enchantment. All nature brought joy to his heart. The animals were subject to him. He was king and master of all, "Lord of the fowl and the brute." The freshness of youth coursed in his veins; he was strong, agile and healthful. This was to be his lot for a few years on earth. Then, without passing through the agonies of death, he was to be transported to the realms of eternal bliss. There he would see God, face to face, and reign with Him forever.

Men sometimes deny the existence of the soul. They attribute our mental

activities to a mere animal organism. Reason and will they consider as highly developed forms of animal instinct. They tell us that the material brain thinks.

The mind, indeed, gets all its impressions through the bodily senses. All our bodily sensations are transmitted to the brain. From the brain they are communicated, in some mysterious manner, to the mind. The body is the instrument through which the soul acts. It were as reasonable to say that the telegraph instrument sent the message that has been flashed over the wires, as to say that the brain is the principle of thought.

Not only can we think of things that come within the sphere of our senses, but we can contemplate abstract ideas. We can ponder over such spiritual concepts as truth, justice, honor, pride and purity. Those ideas in themselves could not appeal to a mere material organism.

Man is conscious of himself. He is conscious that he is a unit. If he were a mere physical organism, his knowledge of himself would be confined to mere sense perceptions. His consciousness of self would not be the simple individual idea that he now has. He would not then say: "I see, I smell, I hear." He would say: "My eyes see, my nose smells, my ears hear." Then his consciousness would change with the physical changes that take place within him. If he lost a hand or a foot, he could not be conscious of himself in the same manner as before. Science teaches that our bodies undergo a complete change every few years. So if man were conscious of himself merely through his physical being, he could not be conscious of his own identity throughout life. His identity would change every time his organism changed.

Man possesses freewill. He may

choose or reject things at will. Yet if he possessed no soul, if he were a mere animal, he would, at least, not be able to control his animal desires. If there is nothing in him higher than animal nature, then he has no power to overcome the inclinations of animal nature. Yet no one will deny that man can control the demands of his body. The body craves for food, yet man can sit down and undergo a "hunger strike." Man can choose things that are repulsive to his bodily senses. He can deny himself things that are delightful to his senses. He can elect to do things that are harmful to his body. He can destroy his own body.

The brute can not commit suicide because it possesses no faculties that can control its physical desire to live.

The idea of morality exists in the world. There are laws. There are courts of justice. There are prisons. These all presuppose that man is re-

sponsible for his actions. If his actions were but the result of impressions in his physical organism, he would not be accountable for them. He is accountable because he is a free agent. He is a moral being because he possesses a freewill. If his mentality were mere cultivated brute instinct, he could never grasp the faintest idea of good and evil in the abstract. Good would mean those things that please his senses and evil would mean things that are distasteful to the senses.

There is a universal law of nature that is unanimously recognized by scientists. All the faculties of a being, whether it be a simple atom or an animal organism, exists solely for its own development and preservation and for the propagation of its own species. The vegetative and sensitive faculties of the animal all work merely for the development and preservation of animal life. Even instinct, the noblest

faculty of the animal, never rises above its material wants. If man's higher faculties were material they would serve only for the wants of the body.

Intellect and will contribute little or nothing to the development of the human organism. We can not add one hair's breadth to the body by thinking. The will has no conscious control over the internal organs. The higher faculties have a nobler sphere of activity than that of the material body. They are constantly striving after spiritual things. This could not be so if they were mere powers of the physical organs. According to the universal law of nature, they would merely tend to the perfection and conservation of the material organism to which they belong. No other reasonable explanation can be given for the existence of intellect and will than that they are faculties of a spiritual soul.

CHAPTER XII.

The Age of Man.

THE whole human race is descended from Adam and Eve. They were the first parents of all mankind. "And Adam called the name of his wife Eve, because she was the mother of all the living."[1] Before the time of Adam, "there was not a man to till the earth."[2] Adam was the "first formed by God the Father of the World, when he was created alone."[3]

Attempts have been made to prove from Scripture that there were other men on the earth before the time of Adam. Several texts are generally cited to this end. "The Lord set a mark upon Cain, that whosoever found him

[1] Genesis iii, 20.
[2] Genesis ii, 5.
[3] Wisdom x, 1.

should not kill him."[4] "And Cain . . . built a city."[5] The sons of Cain "took wives."[6] These passages indeed indicate that there were many people on the earth. However, it must be remembered that they lived hundreds of years at that time.

Though Cain and Abel alone are mentioned, it is probable that Adam and Eve had many other children. Seth was born after a hundred and thirty years. The descendants of Adam might easily have been a thousand, after one hundred years.

It is sometimes objected that the millions who inhabit the earth today could not have come from one couple. Yet if each couple had but six children, there would have been two millions in four hundred and fifty years. It is easy to see, then, how there could

[4] Genesis iv, 15.
[5] Genesis iv, 17.
[6] Genesis iv, 19.

be fifteen hundred millions after six thousand years or more.

It is impossible to reckon the exact age of the human race. The genealogies of the Bible lead us to suppose that it has been between six thousand and eight thousand years since the creation of man.

The theories concerning "prehistoric" man are without any solid foundation in fact. Geologists speak of "glacial man." They have a scientific theory by which they try to establish the fact of man's existence in the glacial period.

Some say that the glacial period was a hundred thousand years ago. Others maintain that it was but five thousand years ago. Thus there is little difficulty with the idea of "glacial man." If he ever existed he was a son of Adam.

Diversity of nationality and language amongst the peoples of the earth does not argue against the unity of origin. Revelation teaches that all

men are children of Adam and Eve. Climate and habits of life have probably united to form the different types of men.

It will, doubtless, never be known in this world whether all languages are originally derived from one mother tongue. Noted scholars are inclined to the opinion that the diverse languages grew out of one original language. Traces of similarity have been found amongst the great parent languages that would seem to strengthen this opinion. This is one of many questions, the solution of which will delight our intellects in the next world.

Holy Scripture seems to refer clearly to one original language. "The earth was of one tongue, and of the same speech."[7] The confusion of tongues at Babel is given as an explanation for the diversity of languages. This narrative may be literally true. Yet

[7] Genesis xi, 1.

there is another interpretation that is widely accepted.

No doubt God confused the minds of these proud Babylonians. They had lost faith in Him. They were a divided people. Thus the confusion of tongues probably meant a gradual separation of people from people and a natural growth of diverse languages. "Let us go down, and there confound their tongue, that they may not understand one another's speech. And so the Lord scattered them from that place into all lands."[8]

The mind naturally wanders to the other countless planets of the universe. It asks whether there are human beings dwelling there. The efforts of men to discover whether or not the other planets are inhabited have led to mere conjecture. Scripture is silent on this point.

However, we can reason from an-

[8] Genesis ii, 7-8.

alogy. If the elements and movements and conditions of the other planets are similar to those of the earth, there is no reason why there should not be living creatures there. There is no reason why God should not have created a race of men on every planet.

There is no reason for supposing that the other planets are inhabited. Yet there may be races other than ours. Nothing has ever been revealed that would even hint at such races.

"What does Faith teach in regard to the question whether the other heavenly bodies may be inhabited? In answer to this question the conclusion drawn from other fundamental dogmas must not be ignored. The Incarnation and Redemption were advanced against the heavenly bodies being inhabited.

Nevertheless, when it is said that Christ died for all men, it means for all the men on earth and no other.

. . . Surely no man, save him that would measure the universe by a two-foot rule, will argue that the distant starry worlds, which existed thousands of years before light reached the human eye, were made solely and wholly for this tiny earth and its people."[9]

[9] Schanz, Christian Apology, translated by Glancey and Schobel, Pustet, 1891, vol. I, pp. 394-395.

CHAPTER XIII.

The Immortality of the Soul.

THERE are some things that are by nature incorruptible. Corruption means dissolution or disintegration. A simple spiritual being, not composed of parts, can not perish. It can not be subject to death or corruption. To destroy a simple being would require a positive act of annihilation. God alone can annihilate a being. It would be to withdraw the act of conservation. The act of conservation is but the act of creation continued.

The human soul is not composed of elements. It is a spiritual substance. It has no extension in space, no component parts. It can not be weighed, measured or photographed. It is essentially a simple being. We know

this from the fact of self-consciousness and from the simplicity of thoughts and ideas that form the intellectual life of the soul. The human soul is therefore exempt from death and dissolution.

The human body is a perishable being. It consists of atomic combinations. By its very nature it is subject to decomposition. After the resurrection, the body will be raised to a higher state. It will be glorified. This will take place by the intervention of Omnipotence. Then the body will be immortal.

The human soul depends on no other created principle for its life. It is itself the principle of life within us. The body receives its life from the soul. When the body becomes an unfit habitation, the soul leaves it. At death, the soul departs from the body.

Not so with animal life. The so-called "animal soul" depends for its life

upon the animal body. The "animal soul" has none other than organic activities. Hence, it has a mere material existence. Its life and faculties are inseparably bound up with the material organism. When the material organism is mortally injured the "animal soul" perishes. For it is nothing else than the activity of an animal organism.

Occasionally someone declares that the brute has a soul, that it possesses the faculties of intellect and will. There is not the least trace of these faculties in brute life. Animals are capable of training, but they are not capable of education. To possess intellect would be to have the powers of thought.

If even the highest type of ape could show, by word or sign, that it had formed within itself the simplest opinion, then we would be forced to surrender our position. If it could ever be proved that a single dumb animal

is self-conscious, then we would be forced to admit that the human race as a whole has been in error for six thousand years.

True, the lower animals show wonderful instinct. Even the rats leave a leaking vessel. It is known that they leave parts of mines before the roof begins to fall. Skilled miners know there is danger when the rats begin to leave. This is either instinct or intelligence. If it is intelligence it is of a higher order than that of man. It would, indeed, be mortifying to discover that we possess an intellect inferior to that of rats.

There is indeed a marked analogy between animal instinct and human intelligence. Yet this but serves to show the marvelous harmony that exists in God's creation. God is powerful enough to make all created natures follow certain universal laws. God has so ordained that all living

beings act not only in accordance with their individual natures, but also in accordance with the state in which they actually exist.

"The caterpillar, pupa, and the butterfly, the same animal in the three distinct stages of its development, leads, in each of these, a different kind of life, has different instincts and different means of sustenance inasmuch as the faculties or functions adapt themselves to the natural state of the animal."[1]

This is a universal law of nature. The human soul is also subject to this law. Whilst the soul is united with the body, it acts through the instrumentality of the bodily senses. This is indeed a natural state of the soul. It is, however, but a temporary state of dependence on the body.

The soul's activity does not necessarily depend on the body. Its faculties

[1] Rev. Geo. Fell, S. J., Immortality of the Soul. p. 76.

are not powers of the body. The material and the visible do not form the proper sphere for the soul's activity. The intellect was created for truth. The will was created for good. Thus the proper sphere for the soul is the realm of the spiritual.

The soul can act even independently of the body. Beyond the grave, the soul will deal with intellectual things, with principles, with essence, with the angels. Then it can commune with God the true and ultimate end of its existence. In the next life the soul can know, understand, will, remember, love. It will possess all its proper faculties. It will retain the spiritual ideas it has stored up during its earthly life.

The end and object of the soul's existence is not the perfection of the corporal organism to which it is united. It is the perfection of its own faculties. This it will attain in the next world.

The body still exists after death. It is, indeed, lifeless. For the life-giving soul has abandoned it. Yet the soul is more real than the body. It has a much more perfect being. It is made to the image of God Himself. Surely, then, the soul can not cease to exist.

"Death shall not lord it over the soul; but neither annihilation. Strictly speaking, even a simple, subsistent being might be annihilated. But what power should bring the soul to naught? A natural power is entirely out of the question.

We find in the whole universe an everlasting dying, but never, as yet, have we witnessed a single instance of annihilation. Hence, we can justly conclude: Annihilation of the soul through the powers of nature is an impossibility. The chemical and physical powers can compose and decompose; they can make a tree wither

away, lose its leaves, rot from crown to root. But in all these processes no mite of matter, no atom, is lost, and hence, we see decomposition, not annihilation.

Water, whether it evaporate in the air, whether it freeze into ice, or whether, in the grape, it be boiled by the rays of the sun, ever remains the same water, just as much and just as little in one form as in another. There was not a single drop of water that concurred to replenish the oceans in the first days of creation, which does not exist today. Millions of times has it migrated from the tranquil surface of the ocean to the vapory mantle of the sky, from which it fell and alighted on the summit of a snow-capped mountain, whence it was driven over hill and dale, through forest and meadow, and finally back into the arms of Neptune. Never in all these wanderings has it gone astray; no, not a

single drop of all that indefinite number.

"A particle of iron may enter into combination with sulphur and form sulphurate of iron; it may then liberate itself, and with oxygen form red iron ore; it may, in the meteorolite, fly through the universe; in the wheel of the 'iron horse' dash along the rails; it ever remains the self-same particle in all these diverse forms.

And when once the human body 'lies moudering in the grave,' and the several constituent substances are resolved, not an atom is lost; everything remains, and enters new and ever new combinations. Thus, if the weight of the universe on the first day of creation were compared with its weight today, it would be found to be identical.

"And not only matter, but force, too, is inamissible. It is one of the most important discoveries of modern

physicists to have found the law of the conservation of energy, according to which, for example, the efficient motive power in the motion of a body is changed into a perfectly correlative amount of heat; heat, then, is changed into steam, and at the end of these processes it is found that not a fraction of the original amount of energy is lost. The renowned English physicist, Tyndall, is, therefore, right when he says that everywhere there is change, but nowhere annihilation.

"Even the end of the animal soul is not annihilation; just as little as its beginning was creation. Since the animal's vital principle has no being of its own, but exists only in and through the organism, it neither originates nor ceases by itself, but does both in conjunction with the body. As we can not predicate, v. g., of a thought or a figure, that it originated from nothing, and will return to noth-

ing, so neither can we predicate this of the animal soul. It is conceived in, and produced by, the organism; but this is not creation, but transmutation; and with the death of the animal its soul does not become simply nothing, but the organism with which it formed one being becomes lifeless, which again is transmutation."[2]

The soul is immortal. It is immortal and everlasting of its own nature. Yet it is not immortal in the sense in which God is immortal. God to be God is necessarily immortal and eternal. The soul is immortal and everlasting because death can not destroy it and God will not annihilate it. Holy Scripture says: "Who (God) only hath immortality."[3] This means that God has immortality of Himself. It may be also said that God alone has life. It is He Who

[2] Rev. Geo. Fell, S. J., Immortality of the Soul. pp. 77-79.
[3] 1 Epistle to Timothy vi, 16.

gives life to creatures whether it last only for a time or forever. It is God Who preserves life in immortal creatures. If God were to withdraw His care from a creature it would, in that moment, pass into nothingness.

It has been said that whatever originates in time also passes away in time; whatever comes from nothing returns to nothing. They tell us that if the soul is everlasting it is infinite like God. "In order to last infinitely, it is not necessary that the being be infinite; it must needs only be kept every moment in existence by an exterior power, by the Almighty Creator Who preserves all created beings."[4] "Whatever originates from nothing must return to nothing unless God preserves it in being."[5]

The soul of man does not grow old.

[4] St. Thomas i, q. Disp. de Anim. 14.
[5] St. Thomas i, q. 75, art. 6.

When men become old and decrepit their mental powers are then often in their highest vigor. The mind is still yearning for more light, more knowledge, when the body is tottering to the grave. This shows that the soul does not attain its perfection in this life.

Some of the greatest scholars pass from this life with the enigmas of life still unsolved. The simplest questions are still shrouded in mystery for them. Their being is filled with secrets that they were never able to discover. Modern progress has added little to the perfection of man's faculties. The struggle for existence in modern times seems rather to make for destruction than for perfection.

All other earthly beings attain their natural perfection in this life. The soul of man, too, must attain its perfection. Yet it can not attain it in this life. It must, therefore, attain

it in eternity. In the next life the soul will know itself. To know ourselves has ever been the great problem of life.

In that higher life the soul will possess that infinite Beauty, infinite Truth, infinite Good for which it has yearned in this life. It will then possess the fullness of knowledge and wisdom for which it has struggled. It will then rejoice in the endless glow of infinite Light and Reason. It will then enjoy the company of the angelic spirits and it will rest in the Bosom of its God and Creator.

Holy Scripture explicitly teaches that the soul of man is immortal. "Fear ye not them that kill the body, and are not able to kill the soul."[6] Here reference is made to the mortality of the body and the immortality of the soul. "Jesus said to him: Amen, I say to thee, this day

[6] St. Matthew x, 28.

thou shalt be with Me in Paradise!"[7] Thus Christ spoke to the good thief. His lifeless body would be buried, but his soul would be with God.

Christ "preached to those spirits that were in prison."[8] By this is meant the souls of the just who were waiting in Limbo for the Redemption.

"What doth it profit a man, if he gain the whole world and suffer the loss of his own soul?" said Jesus. "Or what exchange shall a man give for his soul? For the Son of Man shall come in the glory of his Father with His angels and then will He render to every man according to his works."[9] At the last Judgment all the souls of men will still be alive, according to this testimony of Christ.

"For though, for the present time," says the aged Eleazar, "I should be

[7] St. Luke xxiii, 43.
[8] 1 Epistle of St. Peter iii, 19.
[9] St. Matthew xvi, 26-27.

delivered from the punishments of men, yet should I not escape the hand of the Almighty neither alive nor dead."[10] Eleazar here professed his belief in the life beyond the grave.

The history of the martyrdom suffered by the seven Machabees and their mother is a profession of faith in the future life and the immortality of the soul.[11] Judas Machabeus sent an offering "for sacrifices to be offered for the sins of the dead . . . because he considered that those who had fallen asleep with godliness had great grace laid up for them. It is therefore a holy and a wholesome thought to pray for the dead, that they may be loosed from their sins."[12] "The just shall live for evermore," says the Book of Wisdom, "and their reward is with the Lord."[13] In the Book of

[10] 2 Machabees vi, 26.
[11] 2 Machabees vii.
[12] 2 Machabees xii, 43-46.
[13] Wisdom v, 16.

Ecclesiastes we read: "Man shall go into the house of his eternity . . . and the dust return into its earth, from whence it was, and the spirit return to God, who gave it."[14]

When Ecclesiastes says: "The death of man and of beasts is one, and the condition of them both is equal,"[15] he refers to the fallen state of man. After he rebelled against God, man became subject to death. His body would go down to corruption like the body of the brute. This is clear, for a little earlier, he speaks of the Judgment: "God shall judge both the just and the wicked."[16]

It must be remembered that the Revelation in the Old Testament was less complete than that of the New. Hence, many doctrines are expressed in a veiled and somewhat obscure manner. However, the whole life and

[14] Ecclesiastes xii, 5-7.
[15] Ecclesiastes iii, 19.
[16] Ecclesiastes iii, 17.

teaching of the Jews clearly show their belief in the immortality of the soul.

The early Fathers of the Church sometimes considered the soul's immortality as a gratuitous gift of God. They did not wish to deny that the soul is by nature immortal. They simply intended to emphasize the fact that God alone is immortal of Himself. Elsewhere they mention beatitude as the only true immortality. By this they would say that a happy eternity is the only immortality to be desired.

All religion, all morality, all peace of heart and all hope depend upon the truth that the soul of man is immortal. Without an immortal soul man would be an enigma. His own nature would be unreasonable. It would simply serve to tantalize him in this life. Life, at best, would be a cruel portion were we not filled with the hope of an endless life beyond the grave.

CHAPTER XIV.

Religion.

RELIGION is the bond of union between God and man. It is the sum of the moral and spiritual relations that exist between the rational creature and his Creator. It is the complexus of norms and precepts that guide man in his relations with God. Man is the noblest of God's earthly creatures. In his soul he bears the beauty of God's own likeness. He is endowed with faculties that resemble the faculties of God Himself.

God could not refuse to enter into relations with man. The very thought of such a course is impossible. Man is God's own handiwork. He is God's own possession. He has an intellect

and a freewill. He is too noble by nature and too noble by origin to be cast aside by his Maker. The man who would build a beautiful structure on a desert island with no other purpose in view than to abandon it would be a fit subject for a madhouse. Much less could the all-wise God create man with the purpose of turning away from him.

Religion must come from God. God alone has the right to establish the laws and precepts that shall govern man's relations with Him. Man can not dictate to God the standards of action that are to define the boundaries between good and evil.

God alone has the right to tell man what manner of action shall deserve reward and what shall incur punishment. God is the Creator, the Master, the Father. Man is the creature, the servant, the child.

Man can not make laws for him-

self and ask God to adjust His judgments accordingly. Man was made to know, love and serve God here on earth and to be happy with Him forever in Heaven.

Knowledge of God is the first essential of religion. But if we are to know God, He must reveal Himself to us. We can not reach a true knowledge of God by mere human calculation. True, we can gaze upon His wondrous creation. We can ponder upon the infinite power and wisdom of the Creator. But this not to know God as He is in Himself.

God made man; then He spoke to him. He told him what service He demanded of him. He told him many mysteries about His Godhead. Always it is religion coming from God to man.

God demanded love of man. It was because of His love for man that He wished to be loved by him. It could never have entered into the mind of

man to aspire to God as his last end. God made it known to him. Love is the basis of religion, the love of God for man and the love of man for God. This is a supernatural love. The highest desire of mere human love could never rise above the narrow confines of the natural world.

We must serve God on earth. It is but reasonable that God should define the nature of our service. To God we owe homage, worship, obedience, adoration.

It were unreasonable to demand that God submit to our desires and opinions in matters of religion. It would be to thrust our human ideas of worship upon God. It were to demand that God should be content with whatever kind of homage we might choose to offer.

We can not invent our own religion. To serve God we must do the will of God in all things our whole life through. The noblest act that man can perform

is to submit in humble obedience to his Creator.

We can not live without God. Our lives must be regulated by God's precepts if we are to be just and upright. We can not be indifferent to God. We must do His will. We must believe all that God has taught even if it be above the natural comprehension of our intellect. We must accept truths that are beyond the sphere of human reason. We must believe all the teachings of Divine Revelation. We must worship God. We must learn to know Him. We must love and serve Him.

True religion, indeed, is in full accord with the dictates of human reason. The power of human reason is a reflected light that comes from the Divine Intellect. God gave us the faculty of reason and then revealed His Truths to us. There are in the human heart certain longings for the

Supernatural which God implanted there at creation. This serves but to emphasize the fact that all true religion comes from God.

There are those who seem to lead good lives without religion. They are just and honest and live in peace with their fellowman. They do not profess any religion. Yet they are not irreligious. Indeed, their lives are regulated by religious principles. This is possible for a time. They are like grain that has sprung up in a field that is not planted. They are the fruits of a former planting. They have received the moral precepts of religion from their forebears. Religious traditions have been handed down to them. They have inherited sentiments of piety and morality from those who have gone before them.

All modern civilization is based upon the teachings of Divine Revelation. No one is good and moral unless he

has profited directly or indirectly by the precepts of God's teaching.

Many who are indifferent to religion are, doubtless, in good faith. If they strive earnestly to find the true religion they can be saved. Yet they can not be ignorant of the fact that there is religion. There is something in man's very nature that cries out for religion. Nor is a mere sentiment sufficient to satisfy the longings of the human heart.

Man feels the need of a defined religion. He wants definite knowledge about his Creator. He wants to know his last end and destiny. He yearns to commune with his God. He feels the need of a higher authority than his own reason to guide him through life. He seeks a power stronger than his own will to direct his actions.

Religious indifference leaves a void in the heart. It leaves the great ques-

tions of life unsolved. Defined religion alone can bring us peace of heart.

God has given us a religion that satisfies every need of our spiritual nature. This religion is not a chance collection of precepts and tenets. It is unchangeable and defined. It is Divine. It is suited to the spiritual nature of man in every age. To be without religion is to be estranged from God. For religion is the only bond that can unite the earthly creature with his God.

To establish the fact that the Christian religion is revealed by God it is necessary only to revert to the history of the world. We see it throughout the centuries from the very cradle of the human race in all its stages of development.

In the beginning we have the primitive or patriarchial religion. It is a supernatural religion containing dogmas and precepts imposed upon our first

parents. It taught them the existence of good and bad angels. It revealed to them the dogma of a future Redeemer. It gave them the positive precepts of observing the Sabbath and offering sacrifices. This religion was binding upon all men and sufficed for their salvation until the coming of Christ.

There was, however, one exception. From the time of Moses unto the coming of Christ, the Jewish people were bound by the laws of Moses. This forms the Mosaic religion. This was merely the primitive religion raised to a higher degree of perfection by the revelation of new dogmas and precepts. Its special purpose was to prepare for the coming of the Messias.

During four thousand years mankind had worshiped God and worked out their salvation in the hope of the Redeemer to come. Now the promised Redeemer comes, as He says,

not to destroy, but to fulfil the law. He raised the law to the fullness of its perfection. Hence we see that the Christian religion is one with the primitive and the Mosaic law. It is the fulfillment, the perfection of revealed religion.

There is, then, but one true religion. This religion is supernatural and divine, revealed to man by God Himself. It is found today in all its perfection under the title of Christianity.

CHAPTER XV.

Revelation.

REVELATION is the truth which God has made known to man in a supernatural manner. Left to himself, man could never go beyond the narrow limits of his own reason. God made man for a destiny higher and greater than any the world of nature could give. With this in view, God came down into man's little world, as it were, and told him many of the great truths that belong to the supernatural world beyond. He extended man's horizon of knowledge. He opened up to him the secrets of Divinity. He made known His will to him.

God revealed to man many truths that are beyond his natural comprehension. These are called mysteries.

He revealed other truths to man that are, in themselves, within the sphere of human reason.

There are those who deny the possibility of Revelation. Those who deny the existence of a personal God also hold, as a consequence, that Revelation is impossible. Some maintain that it would be unreasonable to reveal to man truths that he can not comprehend. Others say that it is contrary to Divine Wisdom to teach that God should make known truths to man in a miraculous manner after He had created him without a knowledge of them.

According to their theory human nature was fitted by creation for the working out of its own end. Hence, it could have no need of Revelation. Indeed, God endowed human nature with all the knowledge necessary for its own natural ends. Yet He has raised it to a higher order than its own.

He has bestowed upon it knowledge that is above its own natural sphere. This He does by Revelation.

God is a personal God, possessing infinite power of intellect and will. Hence, He can communicate His truth to His rational creatures by any means He may choose. Nor is it unreasonable to reveal mysteries to man. Man's intellect has indeed been darkened by original sin. Yet it is still capable of receiving immutable truth from God. Though man may not fully comprehend it, the Divine message can be delivered to him.

There is also a natural revelation. It is the knowledge we have of God through the works of creation.

Divine Revelation is the word of God to man. Surely God can not be denied the privilege of speaking to His rational creatures. He can tell us whatever He chooses about the supernatural. It is but natural that

He should tell us of the destiny that awaits us in Eternity. He may, indeed, withhold His mysteries from us, but He is also free to make them known to us.

Revelation does not mean that God speaks to each individual man. He has spoken through the Patriarchs and Prophets and through Christ and the Apostles. Through them the human race learns the truths of Divine Revelation.

Revelation is a gift of God to man. Without the teachings of Revelation the world would be steeped in moral degradation and despair. The great learning of pagan philosophers could not heal the moral evils of their times. The spread of Christian teachings changed the whole aspect of human society. A return to pagan life, such as we sometimes see about us, revives the sad conditions of those ages in which Divine Revelation was unknown.

Divine Revelation is taught by the Church. It is contained in Tradition and in the Scriptures. By Tradition is meant the teachings of the early Fathers and the definitions of the Church. By Scripture is meant all those sacred writings which the Church has declared to be the inspired Word of God. The Holy Ghost abides with the Church to preserve it from error. God guards His truth in His Church until the end of time. "The Spirit of Truth," says Christ to His disciples . . . "He shall abide with you and be in you."[1]

The Bible is the book which contains the written account of Divine Revelation. It is composed of the Old Testament and the New Testament. The Old Testament embodies the Revelation that was given to man from the time of Adam to the coming of Christ. The New Testament com-

[1] St. John xiv, 17.

prises the teachings of Christ and the Apostles.

The Bible has ever been held sacred in the Church. It contains the inspired word of God. The Church, by her divine authority, decides what writings are inspired. The writings authorized by the Church are called the canonical writings of Sacred Scripture. In the beginning many other epistles and gospels were written. These latter writings were not inspired. Therefore they were not embodied in the Bible.

It was not enough for God to reveal His truths to man. If left to the whims of men, Divine Revelation would soon have become corrupted. God, therefore, gave divine authority to His Church to preserve intact His Sacred Truth until the end of time.

Had God merely left His Revelation written in a book, it could not have come down through the course of ages

in all its purity. Men would interpret it falsely. The book might be poorly translated. The language in which it was originally written might be forgotten. Thus, we could never know with certainty the teachings of Divine Revelation. But God, in His divine wisdom, gave us the Church as a living Teacher to bear the teachings of Divine Revelation to all men.

CHAPTER XVI.

The Angels.

BESIDES man, God created other rational beings. These are pure spirits called angels. They were created before man. When God cast out Adam from the Garden of Eden, "He placed before the paradise of pleasure cherubims."[1]

The angels minister to God. They are often sent to instruct and assist man. "The Lord, said he, in Whose sight I walk, will send His angel with thee, and will direct thy way."[2]

The angels are superior to men; they have a higher intellect. "Thou art wise, O King," said the woman, "according to the wisdom of an angel

[1] Genesis iii, 24.
[2] Genesis xxiv, 40.

of God, to understand all things upon earth."[3] The angels possess greater powers than man. They are not subject to the laws of gravitation nor to the physical laws. "Thou hast made him (man) a little less than the angels."[4]

There is no explicit mention of the angels in the description of creation given in Genesis. However, "God made Heaven and earth, and the sea, and all things that are in them."[5] This, undoubtedly, includes the angels. The Roman Catechism says: "By the words 'Heaven' and 'earth' is understood all that they contain . . . for God created out of nothing both spiritual nature and the innumerable angels."[6]

St. Augustine says: "Though the angels do not appear to us, yet by Faith we know that they exist and

[3] 2 Kings xiv, 20.
[4] Psalms viii, 6.
[5] Exodus xx, 11.
[6] Part I, Chapter II, nn. 16-17.

we read that they have appeared to many."[7] It is but reasonable to suppose that God created pure spirits, even though we did not know it by Faith. The existence of pure spirits perfects the work of creation, as it were. For there are then material, composite, and spiritual beings.

Though angels have often appeared in a visible form, they have not bodies. God can easily permit the angels to use the form of a body so as to become visible to human eyes when He wishes them to appear to man. Since the angels are pure spirits, they are immortal and incorruptible. They are not composed of parts. They could not be destroyed except God annihilate them.

The angels are not boundless in their presence like God. Though they are not circumscribed by definite measurement, their presence is local. They

[7] Com. on Ps. 103, v. 4.

can pass from one place to another. Thus if an angel is sent to earth it is no longer in Heaven. If it is in Heaven it is not on earth.

An angel exists in space as the human soul exists in the body. Yet it is finite. Hence it is confined within certain fixed limits of space. Though the angels have a high order of intelligence, they do not know the secrets of men's hearts nor future contingencies. "Thou only (O God) knowest the heart of all the children of men."[8]

The angels possess freewill; their will is very perfect, but not indefectible. The decisions of their will are made not after deliberation, but instantaneously. The angels can converse amongst themselves. As pure spirits they do not require words. Their converse is direct from mind to mind without the need of language.

When St. Paul says: "If I speak with

[8] 3 Kings viii, 39.

the tongues of men, and of angels,"[9] he does not mean that the angels have a language. He would say: "If I speak as the angels converse."

The multitude of angels is very great. It is sure that the angels far outnumber the human race. The angels are divided into different orders. The angel Michael is called "one of the Chief Princes."[10] Hence it is supposed that there are different ranks of superiority. Amongst the names mentioned are, the Cherubim,[11] Seraphim,[12] Archangels,[13] Angels, Powers, Virtues,[14] Principalities,[15] Dominations and Thrones.[16] Thus nine different choirs or orders of angels are given.

The angels are divided into three

[9] 1 Epistle to the Corinthians xiii, 1.
[10] Daniel x, 13.
[11] Genesis iii, 24.
[12] Isaias vi, 2.
[13] 1 Thessalonians iv, 15.
[14] 1 Epistle of St. Peter iii, 22.
[15] Epistle to the Ephesians i, 21.
[16] Epistle to the Colossians i, 16.

hierarchies: The Cherubim, Seraphim and Thrones form the highest. They assist at the Divine Throne and are illumined immediately by God. The next are the Dominations, Powers and Virtues. They are sent and illumined by the higher angels and they, in turn, send and illumine the third order. The Principalities, Archangels and Angels form the third hierarchy. They are engaged principally in the care of mankind.

God elevated the angels to the supernatural order. However, the angels were not admitted to supernatural beatitude immediately after their creation. At least they did not enjoy the beatific vision. They had to undergo probation. Since the angels do not live in time as man, this probation needed only to last for an instant.

Many of the angels sinned. It is commonly taught that the angels sinned by pride. The fallen angels were

thrust out of Heaven and cast into hell. They are called demons, bad angels, wicked or impure spirits and devils.

The leader of the fallen angels is called Lucifer, or Satan[17] or Beelzebub.[18] He is also called the devil, the dragon, the old serpent[19] and Belial.[20]

The fallen angels were condemned to hell for all eternity. "Depart from me, you cursed, into everlasting fire which was prepared for the devil and his angels."[21]

God gave fallen man the opportunity to repent. Man possessed the elements of weakness in his nature. The angels were of a higher order and thus their sin was greater. "God spared not the angels that sinned, but delivered them drawn down by

[17] St. Luke xi, 18; xxii, 31.
[18] St. Matthew x, 25.
[19] Apocalypse xx, 2.
[20] 2 Corinthians vi, 15.
[21] St. Matthew xxv, 41.

infernal ropes to the lower hell, into torments."[22]

The bad angels, out of hatred for God and envy for man, tempt us to sin. "Your adversary, the devil, goeth about like a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour."[23] God permits the devils to tempt us by their own natural powers. The devils use external agencies, such as wicked men. They produce phantasies in the mind. They appeal to our lower nature by exciting the nerves and humors. The devils are sometimes permitted to do us physical harm. "Satan . . . struck Job with a very grievous ulcer."[24] "A devil named Amodeus killed Sara's husband."[25] Many cases are related in the Gospels.

Possession by the devil is often mentioned in the Bible. The devil can

[22] 2 Epistle of St. Peter ii, 4.
[23] 1 Epistle of St. Peter v, 8.
[24] Job ii, 7.
[25] Tobias iii, 7.

enter into the body. He can take complete control of it. In this state the person can scarcely act of himself. Yet in no case does the devil gain full control of the person's will.

The devil can also attack the body from without. This action is called obsession. The devil sometimes afflicts bodily harm upon a person.

God can permit the demons to attack the body. He allows him to attack the soul. Thus the devil tempts us to sin. It is not strange then that he may sometimes disturb the body.

Demoniacal possession makes us realize the malice of the devil. It makes us shrink from his suggestions. Perhaps this is why God permits it.

Possession is by no means a personal union between the devil and the one possessed. It bears no resemblance to the indwelling of the Holy Ghost in us. The devil can never enter the depths of our hearts.

Man can enter into relations with the devil. He can worship him and obtain help from him to commit crimes that are beyond ordinary human powers. Christ foretold this: "There shall arise false Christs and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders."[26]

In the Scriptures idolatry is mentioned as the worship of devils. "They shall no more sacrifice their victims to devils."[27] "But the things which the heathens sacrifice they sacrifice to devils, and not to God."[28]

Intercourse with the devils is a form of superstition. However, the mysterious feats of unholy men are not easily to be attributed to the influence of demons. Many performances of spiritists and magicians that would seem to be the work of demons are wrought

[26] St. Matthew xxiv, 24.
[27] Leviticus xvii, 7.
[28] 1 Corinthians x, 20.

by natural resources. It is certain, however, that men can enter into pacts with the devil. It is sufficient for us to know that intercourse with the demons is possible. The individual cases are to be referred to the decision of ecclesiastical authority.

God has appointed angels to watch over us. They are called our guardian angels. "He hath given His angels charge over thee to keep thee in all thy ways."[29] "Great is the dignity of souls," says St. Jerome, "that each one should have, from the moment of birth, an angel delegated for his guidance."[30]

Though the Church has never defined this teaching, she has embodied it in the Breviary. That each has a guardian angel has been believed by the whole Church from the beginning. The testimony from Scripture is based

[29] Psalms xc, 11.

[30] Commentary on St. Matthew xviii, 20.

upon special cases. Angels came to the assistance of Moses, Judith, Tobias, and three youths in the fiery furnace, the Prophets, the Machabees and the Apostles. Theologians teach that but one angel is given the care over each human being. Everyone has his guardian angel. Even the wicked have guardian angels.

Our guardian angels protect us from dangers to both soul and body. By pious thoughts they prompt us to good. They offer our prayers to God and intercede for us. They lead the souls of the dead to Heaven or visit them in Purgatory. "May the angels lead thee to Paradise," says the Roman Ritual in the burial services, "May the choir of angels receive thee." It is commonly taught that the angels can not operate directly on our intellect. They excite good thoughts objectively and thus influence our will to good.

Like a loving parent, our Heavenly Father sends us a companion to guide us on the perilous journey of life. It is but fitting that this protector should be an angel. If bad angels can infest us with their malice, surely the good angels can watch over us with their love. We are destined to dwell with the good angels for all eternity.

CHAPTER XVII.

The Fall of Man.

MAN was pure, innocent and holy when he came from the hand of his Creator. God raised him to a supernatural state. He made him His son by adoption. He made him heir to eternal beatitude. "We are the sons of God . . . and if sons, heirs also; heirs indeed of God."[1] In the beginning man was endowed with divine grace. He could grow in the grace of God. He possessed all virtues. He was free from concupiscence.

Adam and Eve were not ashamed of their nakedness. "They were both naked; to wit, Adam and his wife; and

[1] Epistle to the Romans viii, 15, 17.
[2] Genesis ii, 25.

were not ashamed."[2] After they had fallen into sin, they were ashamed. They covered their nakedness. This shows that concupiscence came upon them. It brought that sense of shame which we call modesty.

Before their fall there was no cause for shame since there was no knowledge of carnal passion. They were like little children who, because they feel no concupiscence, are not ashamed of their nakedness. Man's passions were in complete subjection to his will. His desires were all regulated by reason. He knew no excess in his pleasures. He was moderate and temperate.

In the beginning, man was not subject to death. Had he remained obedient to God, he never would have died. This is a doctrine of Faith. The Council of Milan II, Can. I, says: "Whoever says that Adam, the first man, was made mortal, so that whether he sinned or sinned not he should

have died in his body (that is, he should have gone out of the body not from the deserts of sin, but from the necessity of nature), let him be anathema."

The immortality which Adam enjoyed was not the same as that of the glorified body in Heaven. Adam had to nourish his body with food. "Of every tree, thou shalt eat."[3] Like all material things the body would have been naturally subject to corruption. However, God decreed that it should pass to its glorified state in Heaven without undergoing death and corruption.

It is not revealed how God bestowed this gift of immortality on Adam. He may have done so in a supernatural manner by a miracle. Yet He may have given him natural means to preserve his body from destruction. This is suggested by

[3] Genesis ii, 16.

the "tree of life."[4] Faith does not decide this speculative question. It is sufficient to know that there was no sickness nor suffering nor death on earth in the beginning.

God gave a command to Adam and Eve. They were not to eat the fruit that grew on the tree of knowledge of good and evil. "But of the tree of knowledge of good and evil thou shalt not eat."[5] God demanded obedience of them under severe penalty.

"For," He says, "in what day soever thou shalt eat of it, thou shalt die." This was called the "tree of knowledge" not because it contained natural properties which could give knowledge. By eating thereof our first parents were to learn by sad experience the nature of evil.

Eve was tempted by the serpent. "Now the serpent was more subtle

[4] Genesis ii, 9.
[5] Genesis ii, 17.

than any of the beasts of the earth which the Lord God had made. And he said to the woman: 'Why hath God commanded you, that you should not eat of every tree of Paradise?' And the woman answered him, saying: . . . of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of Paradise, God hath commanded us that we should not eat; and that we should not touch it, lest perhaps we die.' And the serpent said to the woman: 'No, you shall not die the death. For God doth know that in what day soever you shall eat thereof, your eyes shall be opened: and you shall be as gods knowing good and evil.' "[6]

By the serpent is not meant a mere brute. A serpent is not a rational animal. It does not possess the power of speech. It was Satan who spoke in the serpent. "By the envy of the devil, death came into the world."[7]

[6] Genesis iii, 1-5. [7] Wisdom ii, 24.

"The old serpent who is called the devil and Satan, who seduceth the whole world."[8]

Eve listened to the words of the tempter. She was charmed at the prospect of being like God. "And the woman saw that the tree was good to eat, and fair to the eyes, and delightful to behold: and she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave to her husband who did eat."[9]

The sin was committed. They had disobeyed the direct command of God. The creature had rebelled against his Creator. They had incurred the death penalty. "By the disobedience of one man, many were made sinners."[10] Pride was the motive of their sin. "Pride is the beginning of all sin."[11]

After Adam and Eve had eaten the forbidden fruit "the eyes of both of

[8] Apocalypse xii, 9.
[9] Genesis iii, 6.
[10] Epistle to the Romans v, 19.
[11] Ecclesiasticus x, 15.

them were opened."[12] They realized their fault; their conscience smote them and they were ashamed. "Adam and his wife hid themselves from the face of the Lord God."[13]

"The first man sinned mainly by desiring to be like God in the knowledge of good and evil as the serpent suggested to him. He wished to know beforehand what good or evil should befall him. In the second place, he sinned by desiring to be like God, to act of his own power. He wished to be able to seek beatitude by his own natural resources. . . . He wished to be equal to God so as to depend on himself alone and disdain the divine ordinance that had been given him."[14]

Adam and Eve were protected by God's grace until pride arose in their hearts. Pride urged them to strive for

[12] Genesis iii, 7.
[13] Genesis iii, 8.
[14] St. Thomas, 2, q. 163, a. 2.

greater excellence. Then curiosity prompted them to seek more knowledge. Then gluttony suggested that the fruit was good. Then infidelity to God impelled them to believe the words of the devil. Then disobedience led them to transgress the command of God.

It could never have occurred to Adam and Eve to doubt the sincerity of God's threat, had not Satan suggested it. God had told them they would die if they ate the forbidden fruit. Satan tells them they will not die, but will become great as God Himself.

Though the act of eating the forbidden fruit was slight in itself, the sin was most grievous. In its effect, it was the gravest sin ever committed by man. Adam and Eve were both grievously guilty. Eve's malice seems to be greater because she believed the words of the serpent and seduced her husband. However, Adam possessed

great perfection of intellect and will. There is nothing to excuse him from guilt.

By sin our first parents lost sanctifying grace. They became subject to all kinds of sufferings and to death. They lost the virtues with which God had endowed them. They lost the infused knowledge they had received in creation. Their intellect was darkened and their will was weakened. They lost God's favor and incurred the rigors of His justice. They were given over to the servitude of Satan.

"To the woman, the Lord God said: I will multiply thy sorrows and thy conceptions: In sorrow shalt thou bring forth children; thou shalt be under thy husband's power, and he shall have dominion over thee. And to Adam, He said: Because thou hast hearkened to the voice of thy wife and hast eaten of the tree whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldst

not eat, cursed is the earth in thy work; with labor and toil shalt thou eat thereof all the days of thy life. Thorns and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herbs of the earth. In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread till thou return to the earth! . . . and the Lord God sent him out of the paradise of pleasure."[15]

The sin of Adam and Eve is called original sin because it was committed at the very origin of the human race. Adam and Eve are the parents of the whole human family. As such they transmitted their sin to all posterity. We all inherit the sin of our first parents. As they conceived us in the state of sin so we are born in the state of sin. For us original sin is a sin of nature, not a personal sin. We do not inherit the actual sin of Adam. We

[15] Genesis iii, 16-24.

inherit a nature that has been tainted by sin.

The narration in Genesis which describes the fall of man is not a mere fable or allegory. It is not a mixture of fiction and history. The forbidden fruit is not a mere allegory. There is no authority for the opinion that it symbolizes carnal passion. The narration of Genesis is purely historical.

It seems incredible that anyone would reject the doctrine of original sin. We need not seek far for the proofs of the Fall. Man bears within his breast the strongest evidence of the Fall. His very nature proclaims a knowledge of better days. He chafes under the trials and miseries of life. He can never become resigned to his present lot. He craves for knowledge of the world around him. He is as one groping in the dark. He yearns for peace and rest. He longs for a better world.

The world is filled with sorrow and sadness, pain and suffering. Nothing is lasting. Joys turn to sadness. The brightness of love and life is swallowed up in death. Great institutions are built up but to decay. Life is a ceaseless struggle. Immorality consumes virtue that has been patiently cultivated. Selfishness, greed and corruption are rampant amongst men. Men become slaves to their passions. They weep for their weakness and then return to their sin. To be virtuous they must labor and strive with all their heart. To be wicked they need but follow the bent of nature. St. Paul expresses it: "I find then a law that when I have a will to do good evil is present with me."[16]

On all sides there is evidence of a great catastrophe. "Mysterious, variable, inexplicable man is manifestly overthrown. He is a palace that has

[16] Epistle to the Romans vii, 21.

crumbled to pieces, and has been rebuilt with its ruins; where you behold some parts of an imposing appearance, and others extremely offensive to the eye; magnificent colonnades which lead to nothing; lofty porticos and low ceilings; strong lights and deep shades; in a word, confusion and disorder pervading every quarter."[17]

"What remains then but that the cause of these evils is either the wickedness or weakness of God or the punishment of the first and original sin? But because God is neither wicked nor weak, it remains then, contrary to your wishes, and you are forced to admit it, that the heavy yoke would not rest upon the sons of Adam . . . if they had not merited it by original sin."[18]

Man has marred the beauty of his own nature. All other works of cre-

[17] Genius of Christianity, part I, book 3, ch. 3.
[18] St. Augustine, Contra Julianum l. 4, c. 16.

ation fulfill their destiny without opposition. Man alone must struggle to maintain his position. Of all the living creatures on earth man alone must weep and mourn. It is the result of sin. "By one man sin entered into this world, and by sin death; and so death passed upon all men, in whom all have sinned."[19]

By his sin Adam brought upon himself and his posterity not only corporal death, but also the death of the soul. By sin man lost eternal happiness. He was excluded from Heaven. He lost his original justice and became an enemy of God. He could never atone for his offense against God. He was doomed to live and die estranged from God. He had lost sanctifying grace which alone could make him a friend of God.

The gravity of an offense is measured by the dignity of the one of-

[19] Epistle to the Romans v, 12.

fended. God had united man to Himself. Man had cut himself off from God. The offense was against an Infinite Being; as such it was infinite. God had made the bond; man had severed it. God alone could restore this union. Just as God gives corporal life, man may destroy it. Yet neither he nor all the men of earth can restore it.

The justice of God demanded that there be a meet atonement for man's sin. Unless man be raised from the spiritual death into which he had cast himself, he must certainly pass to eternal damnation. Man had chosen for himself. Eternal joy and eternal reprobation had been set before him. He had chosen eternal reprobation.

But God in His mercy loved him. He promised him a Redeemer. This made it possible for man to escape the everlasting fate that had befallen him. God in due time would send His Own

Divine Son to redeem man from sin. He alone could furnish the infinite expiation required for sin. He should become man, suffer and die for the sins of man. He should be born of woman.

A woman had been the cause of sin. A woman should bear the Redeemer of the world. The serpent had tempted the woman to sin; she should crush the head of the serpent. "I will put enmities between thee and the woman . . . she shall crush thy head."[20]

[20] Genesis iii, 15.

CHAPTER XVIII.

The Existence of Evil.

GOD is infinitely good. Yet the world is filled with misery. From the moment of his birth until he breathes forth his last agonized breath man is subject more or less to suffering and sorrow. Physical deformities, mental anguish and moral evils meet us at every turn. It would seem that an omnipotent God Who loves us would free us from these evils.

The existence of evil has ever been a strong weapon of unbelief. Epicurus of old reasoned that if God can not destroy evil, then He is not omnipotent; and if He will not destroy evil He is not all-good. The speciousness of this argument has been a stumbling-block to many.

God is all-powerful and He is all-

good. Nor does reason demand that He use His omnipotence to wipe out evil. God did not create evil. Evil is an imperfection. Evil is the lack of something that is natural to a thing. Blindness in a man is an evil. Blindness in a stone is not an evil. Sickness is the lack of health. Deafness is the lack of hearing. Dumbness is the lack of speech. Sorrow is the lack of joy. Ignorance is the lack of knowledge.

All things that exist are good in themselves. "God saw all things that He had made and they were very good."[1] Evil is not a defect in God's work of creation. God made all things good and blessed them.[2] To man He gave freewill. Man had the choice either to enjoy the good things which God had given him or to reject them. He was made a responsible

1 Genesis i, 31.
2 Genesis i, 24-30.

being. He was made answerable to his Creator for his conduct. God gave him a law and demanded obedience of him.

If man should obey he would receive even greater good things than his nature demanded. He would receive eternal blessings. If he refused to obey God, he would lose many of the good things God had given him. Man refused to obey.

God did not destroy His rebellious creature forthwith. He promised him forgiveness. He promised to send him a Redeemer. Yet he blighted the paradise of pleasure in which He had placed him. "Cursed is the earth in thy work," He said to Adam; "with labor and toil shalt thou eat thereof all the days of thy life. Thorns and thistles shalt it bring forth to thee. . . . In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread till thou return to the earth."[3]

[3] Genesis iii, 17-19.

To the woman, He said: "I will multiply thy sorrows. . . . In sorrow shalt thou bring forth children."[4] Such is the origin of evil. It was in the eternal decrees of God that man should be free to bring evils upon himself.

The decrees of God are inscrutable. To him who believes in the future life, the existence of evil presents no difficulty. He knows that God is infinitely just and infinitely good. He knows that retribution will be made in the next life. It is folly to attempt to measure divine justice by human standards. Not a sigh shall be breathed that God will not reckon. The idea of injustice in God is a contradiction. An unjust God can not be conceived. It is folly to condemn divine justice simply because we can not comprehend it.

[4] Genesis iii, 16.

Moral evil is the result of man's rebellion against God. That which can hinder man from attaining his eternal destiny is the only real evil in the world. All other evils to which man is subject are evil only in so far as they refer to this one evil. Ignorance, folly, insanity, error, falsehood, infidelity, pangs of heart, weakness, bondage, wounds, maladies, hunger, thirst and poverty are all relative evils. If they hinder man in working out his salvation, they are evils indeed. If they aid him, they are blessings.

We are like children out for a holiday. It begins to rain; their joy is turned to gloom. Their father pities them and tries to console them. Yet he inwardly rejoices at the rain because it revives his drooping crops. It gives him the hope of a rich harvest that will enable him to provide all the better for his children. Thus the

rain was a blessing though the children considered it an unmixed evil.[5]

In the physical world there are deserts, barren mountains, poisonous plants. There are plants that produce such harmful drugs as opium and alcohol. There are volcanoes that destroy cities and provinces in their terrible eruptions. There are deadly reptiles and savage beasts; there are pestiferous insects. Superficial men call these things evil.

There are wonders of wisdom in creation that man can never fathom. Science is continually finding new uses for the properties of nature. Every new discovery is a new proof that God created nothing in vain. The more profoundly men study nature the more clearly they see revealed the marvelous wisdom and foresight of the Creator and the usefulness of every creature that exists. There is not a leaf of the forest,

[5] Cardinal Gibbons, Our Christian Heritage, page 102.

nor a blade of grass, a beast of the field, nor the tiniest creeping insect that does not, in some way, manifest the power and wisdom of God.

God is the preserver of all things. He permits particular evils indeed. Yet He always provides for the universal good of man. St. Augustine says: "The omnipotent God . . . would in no manner permit an evil to exist unless He were so omnipotent and so good that He could bring good from evil."[6]

God hates sin. Yet He uses it as a means of good. There are certain virtues which presuppose malice. Penitence can only follow sin. Martyrdom is the result of homicidal crime. Forgiveness must be preceded by injury.

The inequality that exists amongst men does not seem to agree with our idea of Divine Providence. Some dwell in abundance, others in destitu-

[6] Enchiridion, c. ii.

tion. Some must toil and struggle whilst others recline in ease and comfort. Some are blessed with talents, friends, and honors whilst others are ignorant, despised and abandoned. Yet there is no injustice here. God has an eternity in which to equalize the conditions of men.

Equality of position and possession is utterly impossible in human society. Man is a social being; man depends upon man. The strong sustain the weak. The weak lean on the strong. Those in authority make laws. Those who are subject obey them. Thus is fostered in society a spirit of industry, benevolence, magnanimity, gratitude, vigilance and veneration. These are human virtues that constitute the bonds of society. Without inequality there can be no emulation. Without emulation there can be no progress.

If all men were equally rich, wealth would be of no value. Wealth is val-

uable only in so far as it can be offered as a compensation for the labor of others. Equality of wealth would make all men poor.

Dignity is a relative term. There could be no dignities if there were no men without dignity. There can be no superior without an inferior. The social body, like the animal body, can not be all head. It must have eyes to see, feet to move, hands to work, and a back to bear the burden.[7]

Happiness is not always found in the mansions of the rich. The sumptuous banquet is of little value to the millionaire who writhes in the pangs of dyspepsia. Peace and contentment are oftenest found in the humble cottage of the hard-working poor. They are not weighed down with the cares of higher stations in life. If their fare is plain, they have the sweetest of all seasonings, a good appetite. "The

[7] Cardinal Gibbons, Our Christian Heritage, pp. 97, 98.

life of man on earth is a warfare."[8] The present life is merely a time of probation, a period of struggle. The eyes of God are upon us. To struggle bravely is to be victorious. The soldier must bear hardships during the time of war. He does not complain; he knows that his commander sees his trials. He knows that he will be rewarded for faithful service. He does not grieve if he is not rewarded on the field of battle. He is willing to wait until he returns home where his honors will be shared by friends and dear ones.

"Under God's government there are many things which we can not understand, and are to us like a dark enigma. This happens either because the Lord wishes to rebuke our arrogance by restricting our knowledge within narrow bounds, or because He wishes to raise our minds to eternal things."[9]

[8] Job vii, 1.

[9] St. Gregory Nazianzen. Carmine V De Provid. 35-40.

CHAPTER XIX.

The Atonement.

IT is difficult for many to understand why man could not atone for his own sin. Man, it seems, should have been able to reconcile himself to God. Apparently his repentance should have sufficed to satisfy the justice of God. This indeed might have been possible had man in the beginning established his own relations with God. Had man, in the beginning, been the author of his own innocence and holiness, he might now have been able to regain them.

Yet innocence and holiness were free gifts of God to man. Through his own folly man had lost them. If, then, he is ever to possess them again, they can be restored by God alone.

By sin man separated himself from God. It was God Who through love had united man to Himself. And thus, God alone can restore this union which He Himself could make in the beginning.

By his fall man became a slave of Satan. He could never free himself from this servitude. For if Satan was capable of taking man captive, he is also able to keep him in his thralldom. God alone can liberate man from the servitude of the devil.

Man's sin was infinite in so far as it offended God. Man has no means in his possession to make satisfaction for such an offense. God's love had prompted Him to make man heir to eternal glory. Man wilfully wasted his inheritance. Justice required satisfaction. For God is an all-just God. Man had cast away the gifts God had bestowed upon him. He had sold himself to the servitude of Satan.

Someone must pay the price of redemption. The price is infinite. To redeem man was, as it were, a new creation.

God had indeed foreseen from all eternity that man would fall. God knows all things. To Him all things appear in an eternal present. There is no past or future in the infinite knowledge of God. From all eternity, God had decreed that He would redeem man. He Himself would become "God the Saviour."[1] This decree was a free act of His divine will. It was prompted by God's love and mercy for man. Immediately after the fall, God had promised man a Redeemer. He said to the serpent: "She (the woman) shall crush thy head."[2]

True, man would have to suffer. God had given him such a nature that he is capable, in a manner, of co-

[1] Epistle to Titus iii, 4.
[2] Genesis iii, 15.

operating in the work of salvation. By his trials and fidelity he can, in some measure, become worthy to receive the grace of salvation. God decreed that salvation should come upon the human race. Yet He also decreed that the individual should not receive this salvation except through his own cooperation.

Aside from motives of Faith, it is difficult for the human mind to understand the malice of Adam's sin. The act of eating the forbidden fruit was insignificant in itself. Yet there was a principle involved. An example might be drawn from human law. A hostile nation invades our country. Fealty to our country is the highest civic virtue. A citizen hoists the colors of the enemy above his dwelling. He is tried and condemned to death as a traitor. He had offended no one. He had taken nothing from

anyone. He had simply been untrue to his country.

Man indeed rebelled against God. Yet to the unaided reason it seems that eternal damnation is excessive punishment. It seems incredible that an infinitely merciful God could allow man to suffer everlasting torments for a moment's infidelity.

The human mind is lost in striving to comprehend the decrees of Infinite Justice. We strive to measure all by the standards of human justice. Some would even wish to set up maudlin sentimentality as the norm of God's justice. Yet man is no more able to fathom the secrets of God's mercy than to create the angels of Heaven. He would be no more fitted to sit as judge in the Court of Divine Justice than to assume the government of the universe.

We can not complain against Divine Justice. God demanded atone-

ment for man's sin. Yet He Himself paid the price of man's redemption. The complaint is that He asked man to pay his own little share of the price. He asked man to serve Him, to suffer here for a few years before he should return to his eternal inheritance. Alas, many there are who refuse to accept this condition. They prefer to enjoy the pleasures of this world. They reject the service of God and forego the offer God has made to take them back as heirs to His eternal kingdom. They accuse God of injustice because He did not pay all the debt without asking them to contribute.

Nor does God will that anyone should go to eternal damnation. "God will have all men to be saved."[3] God showers His graces upon man to enable him to obtain salvation. He sent His Own Divine Son to teach man the way of salvation. He estab-

[3] 1 Epistle to Timothy ii, 4.

lished His Church to guide him to his eternal destiny.

Yet now, as ever, it is the old temptation of Satan. Man still strives to be like God. He doubts the sincerity of God's commands. He sets up his own ideas as the norm of his relations with his Creator. He criticises the decrees of God. He tries to persuade himself that he is already like God. He pretends that he is self-sufficient unto himself. He would fain be independent of his Creator. He prefers the dim light of his own reason to the Word of his Maker. He says that beyond the confines of his intelligence there is no knowledge. Whatever he can not understand can not be.

Thus he deludes himself. When he accuses God of injustice, he unwittingly proclaims the justice of God. For there can be no God but a just God. Take away infinite justice from God and you have no God. A God without

justice would be an imperfect God. But an imperfect God is a contradiction in terms.

Man's life on earth is filled with misery and suffering. He must work out his salvation in fear and trembling. Life is a struggle overflowing with bitterness and sorrow. Yet life is a blessing that only a God of infinite love could give. "To be" is incomparably better than "not to be." If this life were our end and destiny, life would be too often but a poor gift. But life to the man whose hopes are in Eternity is a royal gift worthy of the King of Kings.

"O happy fault," says the Exultet, referring to Adam's sin. God knows how to bring good from evil. In his fallen state, man has attained greater dignity than he could have known otherwise. Now he can show more love for God. Now he can show more gratitude to the good God

Who gave him life. Because of the fall, he has experienced more of God's love.

God the Son became man and died for his salvation. Because of the suffering that sin brought upon the race, there is more opportunity to practice the beautiful virtue of charity. Christ gave us His Own Body and Blood to nourish our souls and to strengthen us against sin. He gave us the Church and the Sacraments. He made mortal men "dispensers of the mysteries of God."[4]

All these wondrous blessings have been heaped upon us because of our fallen state. God does not reward our sinfulness, but He pities our misery. He loves us more, as it were, as the father loved his prodigal son. If we must struggle, God gives us strength. If we are borne down with

[4] 1 Epistle to the Corinthians iv, 1.

grief and sorrow God bears us up. "The life of man upon earth is a warfare."[5] Yet it is our glory that God has fitted us for the combat.

The false philosophy of the world leads men to discontent and despair. It turns men's minds from their true destiny. Yet the love of God reigns above us. God rewards eternally every pang that is borne for love of Him. "We have received," says St. Paul, "not the spirit of this world, but the spirit of God, that we may know the things that are given us from God. . . . But the sensual man perceiveth not those things . . . it is foolishness to him, and he can not understand."[6]

And again he says: "The wisdom of the flesh is death, but the wisdom of the spirit is life and peace. . . .

[5] Job vii, 1.
[6] 1 Epistle to the Corinthians ii, 11-14.

Whosoever are led by the spirit of God, they are the sons of God . . . and if sons heirs also; heirs indeed of God, and joint heirs with Christ; yet so, if we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified with Him."[7]

[7] Epistle to the Romans viii, 6-17.

CHAPTER XX.

Faith.

FAITH is the acceptance of another's testimony. Divine Faith is the acceptance of God's testimony. We can believe what we know from others only. We can not believe what we know of ourselves. If I am told something I may either believe it or not believe it. If there is no possibility of error or deceit in what I am told right reason demands that I believe it.

God can neither err nor deceive. He is Truth itself. Reason dictates that I should believe all that He tells me. Though God's testimony be far beyond my comprehension, I must believe it. To demand proof for what God teaches is to insult God.

God has indeed given us many proofs

of His Divine Revelation. Yet it would be absurd to seek proofs of God's truthfulness. To say that we believe nothing that is beyond human reason is to limit God to the narrow confines of our own imperfect knowledge. It were the same as if a man who had never been ten miles away from his native village were to say to some noted traveler from India: "I will not believe anything you tell me unless I see it myself."

Faith relates primarily to the things that we do not know and that we can not learn of ourselves. We can not believe anything unless it has been previously unseen or unknown to us. "Faith then cometh by hearing."[1]

Faith is reasonable because it accepts the truth from One Who can neither err nor deceive. Unbelief is unreasonable and most of all agnostic

[1] Epistle to the Romans x, 17.

unbelief. There are indeed unbelievers who profess to believe in God. Unbelief is properly lack of belief in divine revelation. Some unbelievers are Deists. They believe in the Creator.

Agnostic unbelievers accept the word of all but God and those who teach in His name. They believe scientists, historians and geographers. They believe that the pyramids of Egypt were built by men thousands of years ago. They believe that the archaeologic inscriptions which they find were written by human hands. Yet they hold that the sun and millions of other stars and planets are the result of chance.

The pyramids stand coldly mocking the pride of man whilst the great orbs of the heavens revolve in their never-ceasing course and shed light and warmth upon us.

If a piece of wall is found in ruin, they immediately conclude that a rational being built it. But they ascribe the wondrous edifice of the universe to a nameless force.

If they found watches hanging on the branches of a tree, they would declare that the watches were made by intelligent beings. Yet they would tell you that the tree grew up in obedience to a non-intelligent law.

They believe that the effect can be greater than the cause. They believe that the effect can exist without the cause.

Faith is not a slavery of the human reason. It extends the powers of the human reason far beyond their natural sphere. The mind of man operates within its narrow limits. Beyond certain natural confines it can only conjecture. Faith leads man out of his little circle of knowledge and reveals

to him wonders of the supernatural world.

There are powerful telescopes through which we can see thousands of stars that are invisible to the naked eye. Yet no one says that these instruments enslave the eye. Divine Faith is like a marvelous telescope that reveals the hidden things of God and the Supernatural to our intellectual vision.

Faith must ever agree with right reason. For both Faith and reason come from God. Reason is the basis of Faith. None but a rational creature can believe. By reason we judge the motives of Faith. If God Himself appeared and revealed a truth to us by the living word, it is our reason that would suggest that we believe it.

Faith does not hamper the workings of reason. The object of human reason is truth. Faith permits reason to delve into the uttermost depths

of all truth. The sum of human knowledge is called science. So long as science is true, it is in perfect accord with Faith.

If science disagrees with Faith, it is science that is in error. It has departed from the path of true knowledge and wandered into the ways of false speculation. Faith is the acceptance of truth; anything else than this can not be called Faith. The acceptance of error is not Faith. Nor is the teaching of error science.

Often it is heralded abroad that there is a contradiction between Faith and science. It is announced from the high places that the teachings of science can not be reconciled with the teachings of Faith. Weak men are appalled. They abandon their Faith because its teachings "have not stood the test of intellectual progress." The tenets of Faith become for them mere forms of superstition. But when "sci-

ence" progresses a few decades more, it abandons its old teachings and sets up a new list of discoveries. It is too late now. The weaklings who lost their Faith are dead. Others will lose their Faith now because of these later "new discoveries."

There was a time when the "scientific world" proclaimed that it had proved the possibility of spontaneous generation. By this some thought to deny creation. Today scientists laugh at the idea of spontaneous generation. They have returned to the teaching that life comes from life.

Occasionally some university professor propounds a new theory for the origin of life. Lately one has offered the theory that all forms of life originated in the ocean. A generation ago evolution was the watchword of science. Even man was supposed to have been evolved from primal matter. But to-

day absolute evolution is left to the sole delight of amateur scientists.

The great Pasteur wrote: "The more I know, the more nearly is my faith that of the Breton peasant. Could I but know all, I would have the faith of a Breton peasant woman."[2]

[2] Catholic Encyclopedia, vol. xi, p. 537.

CHAPTER XXI.

Miracles.

NATURE is finite and limited. God is infinite, free, omnipotent. The whole order of nature came into existence by a mere act of His divine will. God can not be bound by finite laws which He Himself has made.

A miracle suspends the operation of natural laws. Some assert that this would mean that God changes His mind. If God makes a law and then suspends the action of this law it would seem that God had taken a new judgment on the matter and made an exception to His Own rule. However, this is not true.

The judgments of God are unchangeable. With God there is no past or future. All is an eternal present.

When God made the laws of nature, He had in His mind all the exceptions and suspensions to which they are to be subjected.

God raised Lazarus from the dead. Yet God did not change His mind to do this. He knew from all eternity that He would restore life to Lazarus. God here simply suspended the law of death. God knew from all eternity that St. John would emerge unharmed from the caldron of boiling oil.

So it is with all the miracles that ever happened or ever will happen. They call for no change in the all-knowing mind of God. Yet they are a special intervention of divine power in the ordinary workings of nature. Miracles are not worked according to fixed laws. They are effects produced over and above and outside the fixed laws of nature.

It is contended that we can not

know when a given effect is miraculous. For we do not fully understand the laws of nature. We do not know just where the powers of nature end and where the powers of God begin. They maintain that there was a time perhaps when it would have been considered a miracle if an automobile were seen coming down the road.

They hold that the results obtained by the telephone, telegraphy, wireless and electricity might have been considered miraculous a hundred years ago. Had someone demonstrated some of our modern appliances a century ago, they say, he might have been considered a wonder-worker by many. Perhaps new inventions that will be made a hundred years hence, they assert, would be miraculous to us if we could see them today.

It is indeed difficult at times for mere human intelligence to determine the

cause of certain phenomena. Yet it is enough to know that a given effect is quite beyond the power of nature. It would be obviously beyond the powers of nature to cure deadly diseases at a distance by a mere act of the will. It is contrary to the laws of gravitation to walk on the water. To raise the dead to life is beyond the power of any natural cause. To cure leprosy by word is surely beyond the realm of science. To feed five thousand people with five loaves and then gather up twelve baskets of pieces that were left is surely a miracle.

God never works a miracle to satisfy idle curiosity. For every miracle there must be a motive in keeping with divine wisdom. No miracle could ever be wrought in the cause of error, nor in the cause of evil. Any cause for which even one miracle can be proved is, necessarily, the cause of truth and justice.

If a votary of paganism could perform one true miracle in defense of his religion it would prove paganism divine. If Protestantism, Mohammedanism, Buddhism, Brahminism, Spiritualism, Christian Science, or any other cult or sect could prove one true miracle wrought by any of its promoters it would be the one true religion of God.

God has ever employed miracles to confirm His Revelation to man. The Old Testament relates many wondrous miracles wrought amongst the chosen people of God. The prophets worked many miracles. The passage through the Red Sea is one of the most striking miracles related in the Old Testament. Christ wrought many miracles to prove the truth of His mission and teaching.

In Apostolic times and in the early days of the Church, thousands of notable miracles were wrought to con-

firm the establishment of the Church. Miracles are less frequent in the Church today. The Church and her marvelous works for nineteen centuries are wondrous miracles that are ever present to the scrutiny of sincere minds.

Yet miracles have never ceased in the Church. There are great saints in every age to whom God grants the special privilege of working miracles in His name. A certain number of miracles must be clearly proved before any holy person can be canonized.

Countless thousands who flock to the holy Shrine of Lourdes each year attest to the truth of the many great miracles wrought there. They are miracles worked through the intercession of Mary Immaculate.

"Thousands of instances of the best authenticated miracles have taken place in our Church," says Bishop England, "in every age from the days of the

Apostles to the present day, in accordance with the promises of the Saviour, given without any limitation of time. 'And these signs shall follow them that believe in My name; they shall cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing it shall not hurt them; they shall lay their hands upon the sick, and they shall recover!'[1]"[2]

The same great bishop lays down the rules for deciding miracles: "The proof of the truth of a miracle is to be found in its own nature, and not in the circumstances of the time at which it is wrought. There is nothing in the nature of things, or in the nature of religion, to make it impossible for God to do now works similar to those done by Him at any former time. The examiner has only to ascertain two points: first, whether this event oc-

[1] St. Mark xvi, 17-18. [2] See next page.

curred; secondly, whether the occurrence could have taken place without God's special intervention beyond the effects of His natural law. The first he ascertains by ordinary testimony; the second he ascertains by the common belief of competent persons as to what the law of nature can not reach to."[3]

Those who deny the truths of Faith are forced to deny the existence of miracles in the Church. Then, to deny the existence of miracles in the Church, they are constrained to deny the possibility of miracles in general.

No one that accepts the Bible as the inspired word of God can refuse to accept the doctrine of miracles. The New Testament relates not only the miracles of Christ but many miracles wrought by the Apostles. To deny the truth of these miracles is to deny

[3] Page 150, page 149, Bishop England's Works, vol. I, John Murphy & Co., Baltimore, 1849.

the word of God. If, then, miracles were wrought in the beginning, they can certainly take place at any other time. It remains with the will of God alone to decree when and where a miracle shall be wrought.

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